

Introduction to the Keys

In the name of the Lord of Spirits, I will write the secrets of the *Torah* according to [its] Keys.

“Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? Prudent, and he shall know them? For the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them. But the transgressors shall fall therein” (Hosea 14:9).

“What man is he that fears the Lord? Him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose” (Psalm 25:12).

“The Lord God of gods, the Lord God of gods, He knows, and Israel He shall know” (Joshua 22:22).

For this thing that I do – to give a hand with the shortness of my intellect and my heart to discuss the secrets of the *Torah* – is neither from wickedness nor to reveal the *Ayin* (70) faces of the *Torah*, as human beings that are not complete in any of the true completions would think. It is also not because I am wise in my eyes or more kabbalist than those who preceded me among the sage kabbalists that did not reveal what I reveal concerning the secrets of the *Torah*. And it is also not because I think that, if this were not revealed by me, it would not be revealed by any among my fellowmen that are more complete than me. But two causes brought me to this. The first is a divine cause, and the second is a human cause. Indeed, the divine cause is the imminence of the end of time – i.e. the imminence of the time of redemption with the Lord, and the days of their emergence from the darkness into the light. The human cause is the lack of existence of sages in the Wisdom of *Kabbalah* nowadays. When these two recalled causes were revealed to a few of our friends among the

sages of Ei Skalia whose remnants are in Masini – and they are Rabbi Saadiah, the son of Rabbi Yitzchak Galamasi, Rabbi Avraham, the son of Rabbi Shalom Komati, Rabbi Natan, the son of Rabbi Saadiah Charar (may they attain the days of the *Messiah, Amen*) – while the remnants of some are in Palram – and they are Rabbi Achitov Harofe, the son of Rabbi Yitzchak Harofe, Rabbi David Harofe, his brother, , Rabbi Shlomo, the cantor and the son of Rabbi Yachin, and Rabbi Shlomo Harofe, the son of Rabbi David Yshashaq – the knowledge of these seven powers agreed to renew for them and those who resemble them a book that illuminates the darkness in which the sages of the exile persisted [in their] days. And it is that they saw in their heart that the light that will illuminate for them the day according to the wisdom of *Kabbalah* in the secrets of the *Torah* is the light that is recalled in the seven days of Genesis. It is that about which it was said that the Lord concealed it for the future righteous men, for He saw that the wicked are unworthy of using it. It is what was seen by man from the end [beginning] of the world up to its end. And these recalled sages – may their Rock and Savor strengthen them – by seeing what they saw in the power of the abundance of that light, since it was a little with them, asked me for the keys, in order to open by them its gates, so that the little that they had could return to be a plenty. They pleaded me a lot, and they decreed upon me through the decree of love that is between me and them not to refuse this wonderful request that they had.

I, the youngest among the disciples in the Wisdom of the secrets of the *Torah*, while hearing from their mouths this deep question that surrounded me from many sides that do not need to be recalled, almost wished to reject them.

Indeed, when I saw that the renewal of a matter being renewed in the world – and it is that a few people among the sages of the *Talmud*, who resemble those that preceded them among the sages of the additions that take glory in *Kabbalah*, thought to cancel the *Talmud* (which is called the Oral Law according to the way of truth and not according to the imaginations) from whoever is worthy and from whoever is not worthy – then the spirit of zeal passed over me. And I felt zeal for the Lord, the God of Israel, Dweller of the *Cherubim*, my God and the God of my ancestors. And my zeal awakened me for what will come along the way from completing the desiring *Nefesh* of my lovers, who are recalled in the body of the writing in order to reveal in it the witness of those that reject vanity, and in order to awaken with it the desire of those who love the truth, until their lust will return to be a bright light that cleaves to the light illuminating the heart of the craving one that desired it. And this is because of what they asked to achieve by their intellect, and to remove anything that prevents their eternal light from them, until nothing that can prevent it will remain from the side of doubts for them. When all these preventions – which are harder than all the rest of the preventions – will be removed, each [thing that] prevents will compel its master to an eternal death, except for those that were already removed [from death itself]. For concerning it each sinner had an excuse to say. And what should I do if I do not know which is the way of the Tree of Life, I do not know the heat of the sword, and I do not achieve the matter of the *Cherubim* that dwelled ever since before the Garden of *Eden* keeping the way of the Tree of Life? How should I stretch my hand and eat from its fruit? For I have already eaten from the Tree of Knowledge, which compels with death those that eat from it.

This is what brought me to inform [them] about the truth of these matters and their essence to these intellectuals that are recalled in the beginning. After them, all those who see them and wish to live the life that has no death combined in them will [try to] be worthy, for it does not resemble our lives, which are combined with death. For, before we existed in our matter, we were a dead matter, which is a grave of the human seed. And when it grows, life joins it from time to time. And it is the life of his mother, while he is still in her womb. When we go out into the air of the world, our matter returns to be a living being, such as the life of the ox and the ass. And his life [the life of the human being] depends on the air that comes to him from the outside to his nostrils, and also through his food, for it lets the remainder of his rotten body exist. Therefore, in the absence of food or in the absence of air he will die, when the estimated power of each one of them escapes him – the air [requires] a small hour, and the food a few days. If so, the lives in this world are nothing, and man was not created in order to reach only them. Indeed, the life for which man was created will not be complete for him, until he exits this world as a whole and [until] he comes to the World to Come as a whole. As the fetus is not called a complete living being while he is in the womb of his mother, until he goes out from there and is complete in the powers on which the life in this air depends, so a man – i.e. that which is separated from him in order to receive the eternal life – will not be called complete until he receives them. And what was with him will remain inappropriate for receiving the life in the world, part of which he was made. The dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to the Lord Who gave it. Behold, the body has then the likeness of a placenta for the newborn. For even though he grew here in it, he casts it away while emerging

into the air of the world. And the human body has the likeness of the body in the physical world, which is something that includes the heaven, the earth, and all their hosts. Indeed, as the life of the child is not the same while he lives in the womb of his mother and while he is alive in this world, the life of the human *Nefesh* (animal soul) is not equal in this world compared to his life in the World to Come. Indeed, as the fetus supports himself in his mother's womb with his organs growing – and he receives there powers that will keep and lead him when he emerges into this world – so the *Nefesh* while being in this world receive matters and *Middot* (emotional qualities) that keep its existence and life while emerging from this world and going into the World to Come. As that fetus while being in his mother's womb lives by the power of the life in this world – and it is possible for him to emerge into this world alive, or it is possible for him to emerge as dead – so does the *Nefesh*. It will be said about it that it lives by the power of the World to Come, and it is possible for it to emerge from this world alive, or it is possible for it to emerge as dead. Indeed, its death [occurs] when it emerges into this life without the shape of Wisdom and Righteousness – i.e. the owner of this *Nefesh* was neither righteous nor wise, but rather a wicked and a fool. If so, the cause of his livelihood according to this way is also Righteousness and Wisdom. And because these two matters will exist in the hand of each human being, he was first given an intellectual knowledge of nature. Because this natural knowledge will grow in us, we were given a *Torah* that orders these ways at first according to its simplicities, and strengthens our minds with truths – with the good *Kabbalot* of the *Torah* that include all our multitudes.

The Lord – blessed be He – further revealed to us according to His holy *Torah* matters that are more subtle than the first ones, and others after them that are even more subtle than them – and even more subtle than the subtle ones – until we reach through our ultimate meticulousness [the point] that we love what we have hated and hate what we have loved. It is known that, for he who loves what he should hate, the law is that it will be a change for him; and for he who hates what he should love, the law is that it will also be a change. For in both of them the intention of what aims at love and hate turned around, for it aimed to hate the hated and love the loved. And for whoever uses the same law for both, his law is to be loved. It was already known that man could only be found in the world of man. After man, there is a man combined from a spiritual and divine shape, and from an earthly natural matter. And he comes into existence after he did not exist. Moreover, he will not exist [anymore] after his [earthly] existence: Everything will return from him to that thing from where he was according to his nature. The Lord saw that this is the existence, and the return to inexistence at last will be canceled in the people. And He combined a third thing in the combination of this man – and it is the intellect. It was inappropriate for this intellect to tie its combination with the human matter, except with his form because of its virtue. And it [the intellect] will be for it [the form] in the likeness of a Rabbi that leads and saves it from the hand of the powers that are compelled from the matter. Therefore, it was appropriate for this intellect leading the *Nefesh* to complete the *Nefesh* in all its matters. And sometimes, it will call it 'my mother'; and sometimes, it will call it 'my sister'; and sometimes, it will call it 'my daughter', and sometimes 'my bride'. Also, the law calls it sometimes 'my father', sometimes 'my brother', another

time 'my son', and another time 'my man' – i.e. 'my husband', which is 'my desired', as a bride whose matters are desired. If so, concerning the groom and the bride, their matters are as the desired [male] and the desired [female]. And what is common to both is the matter of desire. Then, it will be possible to say that the intellect desires the *Nefesh*, which desires it. And the intellect will be called desired from the *Nefesh*, and the *Nefesh* will be called desired from the intellect. And the desire will be one thing outside both of them, and they will be its carriers. This is the matter of the intellectual virtue and the matter of the virtue of the *Nefesh* – i.e. the *Nefesh* loves the intellect, for it abounds it from its light, brilliance, and brightness, until it receives from it a great pleasure by seeing through it all those that exist. Nothing in any of them resembles it, is equal to it, or waged against it, for every beauty is under its beauty, every virtue is under its virtue, and every pleasure is under its pleasure. If so, it is appropriate for it [the intellect] to be loved alone, above all those that are loved by it from the side of itself. And so, the intellect sees and observes all the creations, and does not see any creation more beautiful and more worthy of virtue and pleasure than the complete *Nefesh* of man that recognizes its virtue, beauty, and matter. For it is the form that is the most excellent than all the forms that are renewed and connected with this lower matter. And these are the ways of love, affection, and desire, which are between the intellect and the *Nefesh*.

Being the matter so, every intellectual is compelled to conceal what is revealed to him from the generalities of the secrets of the *Torah* – and all the more so from its details – from the eye of our numerous sages – and all the more so from the rest of the peoples of the earth. Behold, he is

also compelled to reveal what was revealed to him from this [Rabbi] to those that are worthy among them – i.e. to those that were among them and separated from them in order to receive the truth itself, since it is the truth. For this is the way of the whole ones among the sages and the prophets – to abound from their goodness upon the good ones that wish to resemble them, and to prevent the good from whoever is not worthy of it in any way in the world. Therefore, it is impossible for me and my fellow, who are among all those that received something concerning this superior matter, to reveal its way explicitly to all. But there is a tool there that is done [built] by the intellectual upon delivering the keys in order to open by them the gates that are locked. So, he who is not worthy will not be able to go through them, for having the keys without knowing where the gates are, or knowing the gates and not knowing how to open them with the keys in his hand, behold, he will not be able to enter what he was [previously] prevented from entering. Therefore, by showing the keys to all, the concealed will still be concealed. And by showing the matter of the gates and the way of their opening to whoever has the keys will be by a way of hint, which is revealed and interpreted by the complete kabbalist and sage, and concealed from the rest [of the people]. Now that this eminent thing came to the thought of my heart – to do so with the recalled [matter] for the honor of the Lord, blessed be He, for the honor of His holy *Torah*, and for the honor of the recalled intellectual sages seeking the secrets of the *Torah* – [I intend] to confirm to them what is still a doubt in them, until they will receive what we have received. And even if it is as a small drop from the great sea, the righteousness of my thought decrees to first include the secrets of the *Torah* under general things. And I will divide the generalities into five parts according to the

generalities of each of the five books of the *Torah*. I will call each general part of them 'a key', and I will ascribe to it a Name that will include all of its generalities at the beginning of its [related] book. It will be compelled from this that I will first gather these generalities according to their simplicities in this first book. And after that, I will discuss their details. Indeed, the matter of my words about their details will be according to one of the ways that are called 'concealed', or by more of them. Behold, I will call the first book, "Key to the Wisdoms"; and the name of the second book will be "Key to the Names"; and the name of the third book will be "Key to Sacrifices"; and the name of the fourth will be "Key to the *Sefirot*"; and the name of the fifth will be "Key to Reproofs". It is inappropriate for any intellectual to blame me for what I will do, but rather sentence me by a scale of merit in it. The Lord knows that I rely on His help aiming in all this at His honor. And He with His Mercies will help me in everything I will say about this.

The generality of the portions

Key to the Wisdoms

Abraham, the gatherer of the dispersed secrets of the *Torah*, said: According to [what] I have seen, the holy people use the secular language in the holy *Torah*, and every man discusses it according to the language of the people under whose hands they are subjected in their exile. They teach their sons in foreign languages about its truth, and they love to discuss in languages other than their holy language. I was jealous for the honor of the Lord and for the honor of the language of our holy *Torah*, with which the tablets were written – and with which the word of the Lord was written with Moses and all the prophets of blessed memory. I wished to restore it to its former glory by informing about the truth of the holy language and its essence, and that it was the beginning of the entire existence. And all the more, concerning all the languages that are truly its daughters, some of them are holy, some of them are close to being holy, and some of them are far from being holy, until they inclined to the fault and the misbegotten, and drove away from it in the essence of distance. And we shall awaken to this in the secret of the scattered generation (דּוֹר הַפְּלָגָה) – with God's help. Behold, I will now gather all the generalities that were included in the first book, and I will recall each portion and its generalities that are worthy of being recalled from it according to its simplicities, which determine its secrets.

Portion Bereshit

This wonderful portion includes the matter of the Creation of the entire world according to its simplicities, the matter of the formation of man, all his matters from the time of his existence up to the day of his death, the matter of the ways of his generations, and the combination that takes place between them and their Master.

Portion Noah

It includes the matter of the Flood, a little about the secret of the sacrifices, the matter of the bloodshed, the matter of the bow – which is a sign of a covenant concerning the Flood – the incest, the matter of the children of Noah, their lands, and languages, the matter of the confusion of the languages, the spreading of the nations in the entire world, and the generations of Shem up to Terach and his sons.

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Portion Lech Lecha

It includes the matter of Abraham our father and his moves with his hardships from the time of his departure from Ur Kashdim to go to the land until he arrived there, his combination with the Lord in the appearance of prophecy, the matter of taking his wife from the Egyptians to the house of the Pharaoh, the afflictions of the Pharaoh for her, the matter of Lot – the son of his brother – with their shepherds, their war and separation, the matter of the war of the kings, and the saving of Lot from their hands. And [it deals also with] the matter of the tithe, the

generosity of Abraham, the matter of his sight and his desire for the seed of an inheritor, his belief in the Lord, the matter of the sacrifices that are among the sections (הבותרים), the order of the exile and its end, the making of the covenant with him in order to give him the lands of ten peoples, the matter of his wife with his maidservant that ran away from her, the angel that announced to her that she was bearing his son and his name was *Yishmael* – and his seed was numerous – the matter of her calling the Lord by a new Name, and also the name of the well – which is the place where it was spoken to her – and the order of the time of Abraham during the birth of this child of his. And further, it is about the Lord showing him after three years from the birth of his son from Hagar, and ordering him the Name of power that changes the nature of birth into following the Lord in perfection and completion. And it is about the change of his name at first with the addition of the letter *He*, and about it being derived then from the name 'the father of the multitude' as the name *Yishmael* is derived from 'Give ear, O Lord'. Moreover, the name Babylon is derived from 'intermingled', the name Peleg from 'divided', and the name Noah from 'will give us comfort'. And 'I have given comfort' is from 'I will wipe out' – or you may say that 'I will wipe out' is from 'I have given comfort' and from 'and He will give comfort' according to the secret way. And so, Seth is from 'Has appointed me'. And so, the name of the town Enoch is as the name of its builder, who was born while it was built. And the name of the place where Cain sits is Nad, as the name of his curse – 'a fugitive and a wanderer'. And the name Cain is from 'I have gotten', but the name Abel is derived from a concealed and revealed derivate – concealed because its derivate was not derived, and revealed because it determines his essence in the beginning

of a thought. This is as the name of the serpent itself, which was derived from 'rush', 'speed', and 'rest', as well as from 'silence' and 'speech' – as the name of the *Chashmal*. And the secret of this is 'resting' and 'rushing', as the matter of rushing and circumcising. And so, Eve is from 'living', and Adam is from 'the earth'. Beneath these names, whose derivate was either recalled or not, there are many unanimous wonders, and many of them are in the *Torah*, in the Prophets, in the Writings, in the words of the *Talmud*, and in what is drawn after them. Therefore, I have hinted at these concerning the name of the first and great man and the complete father for our entire nation, who is Abraham. And [I hinted at] the matter of the circumcision of the flesh at birth and the change of the name from Sarai to [Sarah] lacking half of the power – which is from *Yud* to the *He*. For what is lacking from this was added to the other. And this is the matter of their blessings. And [I also hinted at] the birth of Isaac in the tidings, and his advantage over his brothers.

Portion Wayar Elav

It includes the essence of prophecy according to the virtue of Abraham, and it includes the time and the place. And the details of this matter are many. There is the matter of Sodom and Gomorrah, the matter of the angels with Abraham and Lot, the matter of Lot and his daughters, their salvation from the midst of the overthrow, the matter of the birth of Amon and Moab by the way of the wine from Lot and his two daughters. And there is the matter of Avimelech with Sarah and the testament of the *Torah* about him, which he did not touch due to a divine cause. And there is the matter of closing up the holes [i.e. the

wombs] of the entire house of Elimelech for Sarah, the wife of Abraham. And there is the matter of Isaac, his growth, the casting of Hagar and her son, and the calling of the angel of God to her from the heavens, for her matter was in the beginning with the angel of God that found her nearby a fountain of water in the wilderness – nearby the fountain along the way to Shur. And now, the speech to her was from the heavens. And there is the making of a covenant [between] Abraham and Avimelech during the adjuring in Beer Sheva, for there both adjured. And there, [Abraham] planted a tamarisk-tree. And there, he called onto the Name of the Lord, the Everlasting God. And there is the matter of proving from the beginning up to the end, the matter of the birth of the children of Nehor and Malka, and the birth of the children of his mistress. It is known that there is a place in the *Torah* that gives his story at a great length, and it will be called by a general name. And its details are many matters, as the matter of the flood, the matter of Sodom, and this matter of proving. There is a thing in another place, which is one detail, and it includes an eminent secret concerning the matter of Noah planting a vineyard and Abraham planting a tamarisk-tree, etc. And therefore, it is drawn after the general names in [different] places, and we will include in them all of their simple details. And in some places, we will recall the detail and the generality, while in some places we shall skip a few matters in one place, for we have to recall them in another place – them or those that resemble them according to the questioning of the *Torah* or the intellect. Or we might have already recalled them in what has come – and understand this!

Portion *Chayei Sarah*

It includes the quantity of the days of the two lives of Sarah, her place of burial, and the burying in the cave from Ephron in the field that should have been a family grave. It further includes the matter of the blessing of Abraham, and his servant swearing by the Lord not to take a wife for his son from the daughters of the Canaanites, as the *Torah* said: "Neither shall you make marriages with them" (Deuteronomy 7:3). But he should have taken a wife for his son from those close to him, despite he would not bring his son there to the land of his ancestors. It includes all that happened to Eliezer, the servant of Abraham, until he found Rebecca, the daughter of the cousin of Isaac, who was younger than his brothers (for he was the eighth). And she was the sister of the son of the Aramean. It includes the matter of their reconciliation with her, in order to send her to Isaac to be his wife with the servant of his father, with his people, her nurse, and all of her damsels. And there is their meeting with Isaac, when they came to the field. And he went out there to meditate at the eventide. And there is the matter of him accepting her with love, and the matter of Abraham taking another wife. And her name was Keturah. And there is the birth of the sons from her, and they also gave birth to sons, and sons of sons. And they were divided into nations, and they are the many sons of the concubines. And the son of the lady is special. And there is the special father who fought while being alive, and gave them gifts so that only Isaac could take his possessions. It includes the matter of the death of Abraham and his place of burial, which is close to his wife. And there is the matter of the generations of Yishmael, who procreated, and the names of his sons and the twelve princes that were born to him by their villages, by their encampments, and by their

castles, to inform that they were noble and wellborn people in the name of the sons of Abraham as well. And there is the matter of the death of Yishmael and the dwelling of his sons before Egypt in the land with him.

Portion *Vele Toldot*

It includes the matter of the generations of Isaac and Esau in one womb, and the matter of their struggle together within their mother's womb for a divine cause. And Esau was ruddy all over, as a hairy mantle. And because of the name 'ruddy' and the name 'red', he was called *Edom*. And because of the name of the 'hair', he was called 'a hairy man'. And his mount is mount Seir, and his sons are the sons of Seir. Behold, Esau is *Edom*, and he is the father of *Edom* and his generals. The generals of Chori are the sons of Seir, and all these names are wonders. He was a cunning hunter, a man of the field, while Jacob was a quiet man dwelling in tents. And Isaac loved Esau – a love that depended on something, for he ate of his venison. And Rebecca loved Jacob in a way that did not depend on something. And there is the selling of the birthright for food. And behold, Isaac received a tiding from the Lord in the appearance of prophecy, and an adjournment about the land to be given to him and to his seed. And that is why the Lord prevented him from leaving it. And this is due to him and his father, by saying about Jacob: "Because Abraham heard My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws" (Genesis 26:5). And that is what happened to his wife with Avimelech, even though she was not taken as his mother. And there is the blessing of sowing and the great wealth, the matter of the wells and their names, and the

appearance of the prophecy a second time to announce his blessings. And he built an altar and called upon the Name of the Lord. And there is the adjournment of the covenant between him, Avimelech, and his friends. And the name of the well was Shiva, and he came to Beer Sheva. And there, it is that the wives of Esau were a bitterness of spirit for Isaac and Rebecca, the matter of the savory foods for the blessings, and how Jacob followed his brother Esau according to the advice of his mother, until he took and seized his blessing as he took his birthright. And because "His hand had hold on Esau's heel" (Genesis 25:26), and because the name "Supplanted me" (Genesis 27:36), he called his name Jacob. And there is Esau, his brother, taking comfort in slaying him and his fleeing for this, because of Esau, his brother.

Portion *Wayetze Yaakov*

It includes the matter of the ladder that Jacob saw in a dream of prophecy when he left Beer Sheva, and the destiny of the Lord, Who is always with him when he goes and returns. And there is the matter of him knowing the sanctity of that place. And he did not know it, until its secret was revealed to him. And then, he said: "How full of awe is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven" (Genesis 28:17). This was the solution of the dream that he saw. Therefore, he called the name of the place *Beth El* (house of God), and its name was Luz. And then, he asked by vowing on the bread to eat and the raiment to put on, in order to worship the Lord, by saying: "So that I come back to my father's house in peace, then shall the Lord be my God" (Genesis 28:21). And he called the name of the stone that was set up as a

pillar 'the house of the Lord', and he vowed to give a tenth to the Lord from all that he had. And he went from there, and what was recalled from the matter of the shepherds happened to him, until he found Rachel. And he came to his cousin's house, and he took his two daughters for wives with their two maidservants. And [the portion includes] the keeping of the sheep, the birth of his sons seven years after the keeping of the sheep, his further work for seven other years for Rachel, the matter of working six years for the sheep, and all that is drawn from the dreams, for he saw the angel of God telling him things concerning the sheep – after the saying of the Lord that told him: "Return to the land of your fathers" (Genesis 31:3). And it is about his fleeing and outwitting Laban the Aramean from his land with his wives and with all that he had. And he chased him and reached him in mountain Gilad after seven days. And it is about the coming of God to Laban the Aramean to prove him concerning Jacob, and the stealing of the *Theraphim*, which were the gods of Laban, by Rachel, his daughter. And it is about the reproof between Jacob and Laban and the adjournment in the making of the covenant between them. And the name of the witness of Laban in Aramaic was *Yagar Shahadua*, and Jacob called Gilad in the Holy Language. And this is a true evidence about these two languages. Behold, the stone was set up to be a pillar, and with it were many stones from which the heap was made, by saying: "This heap be a witness, and the pillar be a witness" (Genesis 31:52). And there were judges between them according to the words of Laban: The God of Abraham, the God of Nahor, and also the God of their father. "And Jacob swore by the fear of his father Isaac" (Genesis 31:53). And Jacob offered a sacrifice on the mountain in the secret of the sacrifices, and there was a

meeting of the angels of God that are the camp of God with Jacob in Mahanaim.

Portion *Wayishlah Yaakov*

It includes the sending of the angels to Esau, his fear of him, his prayer to the Lord to save him from his hands, the sending of an offering to him for his blessing, his passing over the ford of Jabbok, his seclusion, his finding of a man that wrestled with him up to the breaking of the day, and the changing of his name due to his victory: "For you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed" (Genesis 32:29). And because of the name 'striven', he called him and said: "For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved" (Genesis 32:31). And [it includes] the prohibition of the thigh-vein, which is upon the hollow of the thigh, for the angel touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh: "And the hollow of Jacob's thigh was strained, as he wrestled with him" (Genesis 32:26). And [it includes] the meeting of the two brothers with all their armies, and the separation in peace from one another – this went to Seir and that went to Suckot. And [it includes] the coming of Jacob to Schem, which is in the land of Canaan, and his buying of the parcel of ground where he had spread his tent at the hand of the children of Hamor – Schem's father – for one hundred pieces of money. "And he erected there an altar, and called it *Eli Elohei Israel*" (Genesis 33:20). And [it includes] the departure of Dina. She was defiled in her departure, and the children of Jacob who used deceit and fraud in this, let them circumcise every male in order to kill them. For on the third day of the circumcision, while they were in pain, Shimon and Levi killed every male, and they dwelled in the town and spoiled everything. Jacob

feared the inhabitants of the land, and even the Canaanites and the Perizzites. And the Lord made him a promise, if he would go up to *Beth El* to make there an altar for God. And He appeared to him when he fled from the face of Esau, his brother. Then, He ordered His entire Host: "Put away the strange gods that are among you, purify yourselves, and change your garments" (Genesis 35:2). And they buried the foreign gods. He further built an altar, and called the place *El Beth El*. And it is the name of that place, for there God was revealed to him, when he fled from the face of his brother. And there, Deborah, Rebecca's nurse, died – in Allon Bacuth. Furthermore, God appeared to Jacob again when he came from Paddan Aram, and He blessed him and ordered for him a change of name, by saying to him: "Your name shall not be called anymore Jacob, but Israel shall be your name. And He called his name Israel" (Genesis 35:10). And He blessed him with the name *El Shaddai*, and told him to be fruitful and multiply, for this name is in charge of procreation, as we have said above concerning the matter of Abraham. Jacob kept the calling of the name *Beth El*. And close to there, Rachel died while giving birth to Benjamin. And concerning the names that were given to his brothers, all were for a known cause – each of them according to their matter and to his matter. For it was said about Reuben that he was the first, as it was written: "My might, and the first fruits of my strength" (Genesis 49:3). He is the son of Leah, while Rachel called this "The son of my might" – i.e. the end of the power. For he was the last one, and this is called Reuben. And the name of the other is "The son of the right" (בן ימין). And [the portion includes] the matter of Reuben with Bilha. And the children of Jacob altogether are twelve, and they are Reuben, Shimon, Levi, Yehuda, Yisaschar, Zevulun – six sons of Leah – two sons of

Rachel – Yosef and Benjamin – two sons of Bilha, the maidservant of Rachel – Dan and Naftali – and two sons of Zilpha, the maidservant of Leah – Gad and Asher. These are the twelve sons of Jacob, which were born to him in Padan Aram. And the generations of Esau were recalled after the death of Abraham and Isaac, and we included their remembrance in Portion *Weele Toledot Yitzchak* by recalling the birth of Esau, for he is Esau, and he is ruddy. And he is also the father of *Edom*.

Portion *Wayeshev Yaakov*

It includes Joseph and his dreams, and also his hardships with his selling to Egypt. It includes the matter of Yehuda with his wife and sons who died, the survival, and the matter of performing the duty of a husband's brother that came to Onan from Er, and to Shelah from Onan. And in the end, it includes the matter of Yehuda with Tamar, his bride, the birth of Peretz and Zerah, the matter of Joseph who was brought down to Egypt, his incidence with the wife of his master, his wonderful success, the matter of the butler and the baker who offended their lord, the king of Egypt, and the matter of their dreams and their solutions.

Portion *Wayehi Meketz*

It includes the matter of the dreams of the Pharaoh, and the recalling made by the chief of the butlers concerning the matter of Joseph who solved the true dreams, as he said: "And it came to pass, as he interpreted to us, and so it was: I was restored to my office, and he was hanged" (Genesis 41:13). And [it includes] how the Pharaoh, when

he heard this, sent [his emissaries], called for Joseph, and took him out of prison. He [Joseph] interpreted his dreams, and it happened as he interpreted. And the two dreams had one interpretation, and because of the cause of the interpretation Joseph excelled and was set as a master for the Pharaoh and all of Egypt – concerning the cause of the dreams and the gathering of the corn. And [it includes] the matter of Joseph's ten brothers, who went down to Egypt to buy food for their home. And it includes the entire accident that happened to Joseph with his brothers, and the deceiving that he used estranging himself from them until his intention in what he wished to perform was fulfilled. Benjamin came to him and he tricked him concerning the matter of the silver goblet, until he stayed with him.

Portion *Wayigash Elav Yehuda*

It includes the matter of the reproof of Yehuda with Joseph for Benjamin, and the matter of Joseph coming to know his brothers and turning then to bring his entire father's house to Egypt. And [it includes] the matter of the Divine Presence that dwelled again upon Jacob after it went away from him, when he heard that Joseph was still alive, as it was said: "The spirit of Jacob their father revived" (Genesis 45:27). And those that went down to Egypt were seventy *Nefashot* (upper souls). And [it includes] the matter of their dwelling in the land according to the Pharaoh, for they were keepers of the cattle. And [it includes] the matter of Joseph, who bought all the cattle of Egypt and gathered all their fortune to be treasure for the Pharaoh, until he bought them also and their land, and they became bondmen sold to the Pharaoh for bread.

Portion *Wayechi Yaakov*

It includes the matter of the swearing, in which Jacob made Joseph swear to bury him in the cave of Machpelah. And he thanked him and kept his word. [And it includes] the matter of the blessing of Ephraim and Manasseh through the Holy Spirit, and the matter of the gathering of his sons to tell them while he was dying what will happen to them in the end of days. He began with Reuben, and he said many things, in order to teach one of them in the likeness of riddles and proverbs. And he blessed them and changed the order of their births in his words, for the name of Shimon, Levi, and Yehuda are after Reuben in [the proper] order. And the correct thing would be for him to put Dan, Naftali, and Asher after them, but he did not do so. Indeed, he further changed another order, for Yisaschar is older than Zevulun, and he preceded Zevulun to Yisaschar. After that, he changed and put Dan, Gad, Asher, and Naftali. And indeed, he set Joseph and Benjamin in their place, for both are last. All that he did was done for a great matter, for it was neither accidentally nor in vain. And [it includes] the matter of the correction of Jacob, the way of his burial, and the matter of the fear of Joseph's brothers. And he swore them to bring his bones from Egypt. Behold, the twelve portions are already complete according to their generalities – great generalities and small generalities – as well as a few particulars. And all is according to the way of the matters of gathering the simplicities, as I intended to do. Now, being this complete, I will return to inform you about a few of the recalled matters according to the concealed way, as I have intended to do. And so I will do in every book among the remaining books,

for I will first write the generalities of their simplicities, and later I will discuss their secrets – with the help of the Almighty – as I have said above. For this is the appropriate way. And indeed, I will now give a preface that includes a great [number of things] according to my intention.

Preface

Know you, my brothers and friends, my chiefs and acquaintances, who are considering my words, that the truth of the *Torah* is according to the way by which man can receive the efflux of prophecy. Its giving to us from Mount Sinai was for this excellent intention, which cannot have any other intention other than this in anyway in the world. The proof for this is that it made the prophet more superior than the rest of the persons in humankind, and it demonstrates that those that are complete in humankind are those that are in the essence of perfection. And they are the prophets. Below them in the human rungs according to the virtues of those that are complete in piousness – and are called in our languages the pious ones – and below them, there are the righteous ones. And the kinds of the prophets are the generality that includes the persons who were righteous, those that further excelled and returned to be pious, and those that excelled even more and returned to be prophets. These three rungs in humankind are those in which it is appropriate to believe, for they alone are the children of the World to Come – in three exchangeable rungs as well. Indeed, besides them there is no way to believe that they have a part in the World to Come appropriately. The judgment of the lads that died while young and still have to sin – since they have not reached the time to be *Bnei Mitzvah* (sons of the precept) – is that they will be neither rewarded nor punished, since we believe that the final reward is an everlasting desirable life, while punishment is an unachieved life with the desire of withdrawing. The recalled righteous ones are those that are drawn after the pious ones and seek to be like them in the piousness. And the pious ones are those that are drawn

after the prophets, pursue their ways, and wish to resemble them in prophecy. The prophets are those that are drawn after the ways of the Lord and desire in their mind to resemble Him. And they examine His actions, ways, *Middot* (emotive qualities), and Names. This is what brings them to receive the effluence from Him, and this is the speech that is uttered by a divine Holy Spirit combined with the human Holy Spirit.

Indeed, the name 'righteous' refers to someone that ascribes to any thing its place, as a few among the persons from the country that behave according to the ways of the sages, even though they have never studied wisdom. The name 'pious one' refers to someone that is righteous, studied wisdom, and grew wise, until he came to know the truth of existence. And our Rabbis of blessed memory, the pious ones of the nations of the world, said about them that they have a place in the World to Come. And they said that the whole Israel has a place in the World to Come, for it was said: "Your people also shall be all righteous, they shall inherit the land forever" (Isaiah 60:21). It is the land of the Living. And if so, the pious one is righteous and wise. And due to his closeness to the prophets, it was said: "Then You spoke in vision to Your godly ones" (Psalm 89:20). And it was said in *Avot* "He that wants to be a pious one should keep the words of the fathers". For in that tractate there are things that awaken the heart of the righteous and order him the way which he will walk in integrity. Indeed, the name 'prophet' truly refers to someone that has received the divine speech – whether much or little, and according to the way of truth. For this speech, which comes from the Holy Spirit to the prophet, first comes only through the human speech. It was further said in the *Torah*: "Moses spoke, and God

answered him by a voice" (Exodus 19:19). And [they] revealed its secret by saying about the voice, "The voice of Moses". From that which I have said about this matter, it will be compelled that the righteous in his way is always with a pious one, so that he will receive from his mouth the wisdoms and follow his ways with a great and brave desire. So, he will return to be a pious one in necessity, if he is not prevented by external or internal preclusions. Moreover, the same will be compelled to happen to the pious one becoming a prophet, until he will return to be a prophet. And the same is compelled to happen to the prophet and the divine abundance, until he will return to cleave to it and live on the day of his death. Being this so, the *Torah* was required to guide us in these three ways of rungs: The first rung is in the simplicities of the *Torah*, which complete the righteous one; [the second one is about] the simplicities of the proverbs and riddles; and [the third one is about] the simplicities of the teachings and the tales. And those which resemble them were drawn after them, from all that will be understood, for it is from that which does not have the essence of intention on it. For we have already said that the essence of the intention in the giving the *Torah*, the Precepts, the statutes, and the ordinances is not that humans will be righteous without knowing any wisdom, but only performing works. For there is a second intention there, and it is that at which the Lord aimed: There will be righteous humans that will study, until they will be wise. And by keeping the ways of justice and wisdom, they will become pious ones.

There is another third intention there, and it is that at which the Lord further aims, after the human beings will be pious ones and will prophesize. For this is the essence of the human achievement in this world. And the Lord first

aimed at it in the Creation of man in this shape, and He told the evidence about His Creation: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (Genesis 1:26). And therefore, Moses said: "Show me now Your ways, that I may know You, to the end that I may find grace in Your sight, and consider that this nation is Your people" (Exodus 33:13). And he further said: "Yet You have said: I know you by name, and you have also found grace in My sight" (Exodus 33:12). As He said, "And I know you by name" (Exodus 33:17). And so, it was further said: "Hear now My words: If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord do make Myself known unto him in a vision, I do speak with him in a dream" (Numbers 12:6). The conclusion is that this way, which is the last essence for man and the first intention for the Lord in our Creation, is achieved by knowing the combination of the letters and Names that were combined from the letters and verses, which were combined from the words called by us by general names, and the portions, which were combined from the verses and the books combined from the portions in their generalities. For the knowledge of the generalities, even though it was included from the particularities, is an excellent knowledge. The righteous should take this knowledge of the *Torah* in its simplicity, in order to complete with it his righteousness. But if he asks to become a pious one, he should take it according to the concealed and philosophical way. Indeed, if he further asks to prophesize, he must take it according to the way of the Names. And this is the concealed kabbalistic way according to the divine intellect.

Now that I have revealed to you the secret of this wonderful preface, if you wish to reach to be a righteous only, it will be enough for you to walk in the ways of the

Torah according to the shapes of its simplicities. If you wish to reach to be a pious one only, it is enough for you to know the secrets of the *Torah* according to the way of the sages of the investigation, for they are righteous as well. Indeed, if you wish to reach through the virtue of the *Torah* to become a prophet, it is enough for you to walk in it in the ways of the prophets, whose ways are to combine the entire *Torah* and take it according to the way of the holy Names from the beginning up to its end. For the true *Kabbalah* came to us showing this: The entire *Torah* is the Names of the Lord – blessed be He – from the *Bet* of 'in the beginning' (*Bereshit*) up to the *Lamed* of "In the sight of all Israel" (Deuteronomy 34:12). And you will be complete in the first two recalled ways. Now that I completed the preface, I will begin discussing about what I have included according to the simplicity in the generality, which is the way of the righteous. After that, I will further discuss it according to the philosophical wisdom in general, which is the way of the pious ones. After that, I will discuss about it according to *Kabbalah*, which is the way of all the prophets of blessed memory.

Indeed, I will discuss about the matter of the simplicities in the first book, which completes the [teachings of the] righteous. The intention in it is in that which comes from telling the matter concerning the Creation of the entire world, due to the fact that the righteous are a very small part of the humankind. Each righteous among the human beings in the beginning was unrighteous. And by wishing to be a righteous, he should be separated in his matters from the matters of the multitude from which he came – i.e. he should be separated from the company of fools and their leaders, and be drawn after the righteous ones that were already separated as well from them, and accustomed

themselves since a long time to walk in the good, straight, and right way. If the fools are his mother and father, neighbors, relatives, the majority of his congregation, or all of them, judgment decrees for him to completely separate from them – even if he should draw away from his land. If he thinks in his heart that it is not important where he goes, because he will find others like them, he should stay in his place and seclude himself from them, or draw away from them a great distance, until it will appear to them that he is a foreigner to them. And he should do them a favor, or give them good things, so that they will not feel his distance and foreignness. He should show them the way of love, and always prove them to ameliorate their ways. If it will be said, "He talks [easily], but how will he be righter than them?", since there is no righteous man in his congregation, there is no way to make him righteous. For this is the human nature – to show the good way to each other. If there is nothing that displays righteousness, it is found that there is no righteous man there. This is as it happens when there is nothing that shows Loving Kindness (*Chesed*), for there is no 'pious one' (*Chasid*). And if there is nothing there to show prophecy, there is no prophet there. If there is no divine abundance there, the Divine Presence completely departs from among them, and there is no [divine] part in any of them. For all of them are beasts. Even though their titles and the likeness of their faces are human faces, their genders are different from the gender of asses, as the genders of monkeys are different from the genders of bears. For these are evil animals, and those are even more evil than them. If so, it is compulsory for the one that wishes to make himself a righteous to ask for a master and a guide on the right path. For then it is possible for him to be right. This is the claim of the claimer, and it is truly a true claim. But one interpretation should be

made known here, and it is that, with the human nature being not to learn until we are taught, there are among the human beings people that are pure in nature from the side of their good temper, while there are some others that have a thick temper. And from the judgment of the pure, they will begin to awaken from themselves. And when they will be shown a little of the way, and a small gate will be opened for them, they will enter from themselves into deep places and bring their doubts out into the light with ease – each one according to the decree of the nature of his tempers, due to one being more than the other. The judgment of those with a coarse temper is to be opposite to this, and it is the meaning of them having a Rabbi, a teacher, and a guide that always opens for them many gates. They stand as thickened [beings] and cannot enter the gates that were opened for them – and all the more so the others will not open them by themselves. Concerning these as well, one is smaller than his friend, and each one of them is based on the thickness of his matter in his tempers at the beginning of his Creation. And everything that was decreed for each one of these human beings at the beginning of Creation according to the matter of his temper has no other judgment upon it after the judgment that was decreed upon it. If there is either a small correction or deterioration from anyone of these, it will be the chance of the temper neither to turn nor to convert it from good to evil and from evil to good. This chance is still in many plots and with known leaders.

Being this so, it is possible for a man or men from the congregation to awaken by themselves, and move to ask for the way of righteousness. This will happen to the righteous when asking for piousness and to be awakened to it by himself. And so, it will happen to the pious one,

when asking for prophecy and to be awakened to it by himself. If this were not so, for prophecy cut itself off from among us, it would not have been possible for it to ever return. The opinion of those thinking that the Lord awakens and moves to this and that – to one of these three ways – is a true opinion according to the way of their saying: "He who comes to be purified is helped". And it is not according to the way of a divine decree or compulsion – Heaven forbid – for there is nothing there except for a remark for only those that are worthy of all these. Therefore, the *Torah* was given, for it shows the three recalled ways – which are the way of righteousness, the way of Loving Kindness, and the way of prophecy – to all in the beginning and in general. From it, the three recalled kinds of human beings will be awakened, each one according to his own power and matter. The *Torah* was required first to complete the hearts of the righteous in three primary ways, which depend on the simplicity and what resembles it. And they are first the simplicity itself; second to it is its interpretation, for the words of interpretation are also as their simplicity; and the third to it is the teaching and the tale, which will also be understood as they are. This is because neither the master of the simplicity revealed to the multitude that there is something concealed in his words, nor did the interpreter himself that interpreted his words, nor did the masters of the tale and the teaching. Indeed, there is a fourth way there, through which those that discuss about it brought out most of the *Torah* from its simplicities. They did not conceal themselves from this, and they are those who step in the way of philosophy. And they said that the entire *Torah* is proverbs and riddles. According to the way of truth, there is a kabbalistic way there, which is more excellent than these recalled two that are four. And it is also divided into three

parts. The first part is the way of the first *Kabbalah*, which takes the way of the shape of the matters from the Book of Formation. And the second is the way of returning the letters to their primary matter, until they require that which gives new shapes. And the third is more excellent than all, and it is the seventh of all the recalled ways. And it is the appropriate one for all those that take this way, to renew through it the world of language and understanding. Indeed, the first three ways complete the righteous, and they are enough for them. The fourth completes all the pious ones – either from the gentiles or from the Jews. The last three complete the prophets – who were, who are, and who will be. I have already discussed about these seven ways in Hidden Treasure of Eden (*Otzar Eden Ganuz*) and in the interpretation of the Book of Formation, and I will also discuss them here – with God's help – in this Book of Keys in a few places.

I will now return to say that what I have began to discuss in this first book, which is called Keys to the Wisdoms, is the matter of the intention of the *Torah* in its simplicity – i.e. telling us the matter of the Creation of the whole world in the beginning of its words. For the righteous is a part of humankind, and man in his gender is a part of the whole world. This was aimed with a subject of wonderful wisdom from the side of the Master who gave us the *Torah*. This is because, [what will happen] if at the beginning of his *Kabbalot* (traditions) man will not be given beliefs that will bring him under the wings of the Divine Presence and matters by which he will know the government of his Master upon him? For He keeps him to reward and punish him, since all is His. And neither all that is in His possession will be told to him, nor will an evidence be brought from what He did to such and such person, His servants,

followers, and lovers, who were rewarded for their deeds with a good reward that had to be awarded to them according to the thoughts of the righteous among the multitude of people in general; and [nothing will be said concerning] the punishment of His disobedient ones, who do not keep His will, for their evil deeds before their death. And He keeps the grace for the good for a long time, and rewards their children and their children's children up to a few generations. And He does the opposite for those driving Him away and angering Him. It would not have been possible in any way with this divine and wonderful means – which is a wisdom after which there is no need to ponder according to the nature of the existence of man – to receive any unnecessary or untrue beliefs. And believes are causes that strengthen the deeds. Therefore, they should precede anything, and this was the intention in the account of the Work of Creation (*Ma'ase Bereshit*) from the mouth of the Lord and from the mouth of Moses according to the way of simplicity. And this was along with the days that revolve and exist in their kinds, being according to the thought. It was only right for the story about them to come, for there is one day from which the beginning of the seven days – which are the seven days of Genesis – came. It was [also] right to show that in each day a renewed thing was created. And because the Light is an excellent thing for those that perceive it, and it is useful for the eye of any living being more than the rest of the benefits known by those that have eyes – and it is a general thing – because of this it was compelled to be created first from Nothingness. And it was an accident carried upon the rest in necessity.

For the one that is not wise has no way of drawing the difference that is between the accident and the essence.

Moreover, every man will think that the existence of darkness requires a carrier in the existence of light itself. Only the sage will be able to know their great difference. And it is not difficult, as the opinion of the multitude, for a light to exist, which illuminates the entire earth without the body of the Sun. And so is darkness, without its matter being the prevention of light from the side of the body of the earth. The one from the multitude will also not know that the world is round, but rather think that it is half a sphere, or flat according to what he perceived in his eyes from it. He will also think that the earth is the bottom of the heavens as the ground of the house is, and that the heavens are as the roof of the house. In conclusion, he will never grasp what the pattern of the world is, but the others will receive all that was told to him – that it is in the shape of such and such from what he will not deny in its feelings in the beginning of a thought. Therefore, the matter of the first day, or the matter of the light and darkness – which are the day and the night that were the first to be created in it – will not burden him.

Behold, if so, after the heavens were created in a simple way with neither light, nor stars, nor the sun and the moon, and after the earth was created with the mountains and all that is still, and with the waters, the light, and the simple fire of the vegetative, living, and speaking beings, it is only right to say that light and darkness were renewed after them. And they are not from them at all. And because of this, the *Torah* was destined to scare the multitude, which was destined to receive it in the matter of punishment: "And He shut up the heaven, so that there shall be no rain, and the ground shall not yield her fruit" (Deuteronomy 11:17) – because of idolatry. And the opposite of this is the reward: "The Lord will open unto you His good

treasure the heaven to give the rain of your land in its season, and to bless all the work of your hand" (Deuteronomy 28:12). Because they are destined to rain, their divine and human givers were wise to inform the people that on the second day the action was renewed in water, whose cause is not one from the sources of light. For they were not in the world yet. If so, the matter of the rain depends on the hand of the Lord – on no other hand. And the actions of human beings will determine its scantiness and plentitude – its blessing and its curse that derive from it. And therefore, the firmament that divides between the superior and inferior waters was recalled. On the third [day], the action of gathering was done, so that the dry land could be seen. For this essential in the story, so that we will be able to see that the dry land and the sea cleave to each other. After this, it was further required to inform that the growth of the plants does not depend on the sources of light, for this compulsion should be believed from the side of the rain being the perception that the plant requires for its growth, for it was bonded with the matter of "Then I will give your rains in their season, and the land shall yield her produce, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit" (Leviticus 26:4). And with these beliefs being essential, they are also true concerning one of the shapes, as we shall reveal to you in its place – with God's help. On the fourth [day], the sources of light and the stars were created, and He wished to inform with this that the superior matters seen by the eyes are created like us. Even though they preceded us in the Creation, they are beautiful and handsome, and illuminate, there is no need to worship them, for they are also servants as we are, and He hinted at this by saying: "And lest you lift your eyes unto the heaven, and when you see the sun, etc." (Deuteronomy

4:19); "But you have the Lord taken and brought forth out of the iron furnace, etc." (Deuteronomy 4:20).

Behold, the Lord informed us that the action of the illuminating things is to govern the day and the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: "And let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days and years" (Genesis 1:14). It is not that they were created in order to be worshiped, or to be means for worshiping the Lord by His people. But the rest of the nations whose existence is under the whole heaven will worship them because of their gullibility. The Lord did all this, but not with this intention, for He created them with powers to illuminate and govern the times after which the nations are drawn. But our virtue is above the heavens and all their hosts, for we worship the Lord according to His will. On the fifth [day], the animals of the sea and the air were created, to inform us about their precedence, for they preceded us in the time of Creation and in the nature of existence. And so, on the sixth [day] He told us that the rest of the animals preceded man in Creation so that he will not be elevated over the creations, as it was said: "A mosquito preceded you in the Creation of the world". Many excellent things were already said about these matters according to their simplicities, according to their interpretations, and according to the teachings and the tales, and they are enough for [our] intention. Behold, the interpretation of our Rabbi Shlomo [Rashi] of blessed memory is eminent, and he simplified [the words of] Rabbi Avraham Ben Ezra of blessed memory and the interpretations of the *Torah* by the Rabbi Moshe Bar Nachman of blessed memory. And he took the good of our Rabbi Saadiah of blessed memory, many more like them in *Bereshit Rabba* and *Tanhuma*, and those that resemble them in their teachings and tales.

Indeed, concerning the creature of man, the Lord told us the difference in his Creation compared with all those created beings. And it is that he alone was created in the image of God and His likeness. For there is nothing in the existence that has a doubt about having a part in the World to Come except man. And he has the possibility of this, but concerning the rest of those existing beings – from those whose existence is above man – their part is predetermined. And He will neither add nor subtract from their part upon which they are. And concerning those whose existence is below man, their part is denied and has no existence in any way. If so, man is left hanging [in the middle] as a possibility, and he is the middle among those whose part is predetermined and those whose part is denied. Therefore, the *Torah* was given to him in order to draw him [to good]: If he keeps it, he will return to the predetermined part, but if he does not keep it, he will stay in the denied [part]. It was said that with this covenant of man the divine action was complete in all His creations. And this particular man, who is the root of the entire species, was put to rule over his nature, for he has an image and a likeness in all that is below him from all that was created with him in his world. On the seventh [day], He told us a special intention, and it is the interruption of action. For, concerning action, after completing all of his work one should rest and consider his action. And he will rejoice in it if it was completely done according to its intention. That day, which is the day of the intention, is worthy of being sacred and blessed. Moreover, it is worthy of being a recalling of the entire action. And so, the day of *Shabbat* was a recalling for the Work of Creation first for the holy convocations. And because Exodus is an emergence from the action of bondage into rest, in the *Kiddush* (sanctification) we combine the recalling of the

exodus. Moreover, these two matters are the head of the belief that we should all believe with no doubt, for from both of them the matter of the difference between us and the rest of the nations of the world will be clarified.

After the Creation was included in a few things, the *Torah* returned to tell us word by word the entire matter of humanity, and the cleaving that is between us and the Giver of the *Torah*. And it was required to tell us our purpose, and it told us our beginning and recalled the matter of Adam and Eve, her Creation from his rib, and the place of formation – which is the place of food. And its name is a Garden planted in the *Eden* eastward, and in it there are the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge. And in each [side], every tree is pleasant to the sight and good for food. And there is a river with four heads. As it was the permission, Adam was permitted to eat from every tree, but not from the Tree of Knowledge. And he broke the precept of his Master and ate with his wife, who ate according to the serpent. And he was forced to die because of this, and the earth was cursed because of this man. And concerning the serpent and Eve, they, their seed after them, and all were driven out of the Garden: "And He placed at the east of the Garden of *Eden* the *Cherubim*, and the flaming sword that turned every way, to keep the way to the Tree of Life" (Genesis 3:24). And the Lord ordered with this the truth of reward and punishment according to the simplicities of the *Torah* by the way of thought of the multitude. And He continued to strengthen this knowledge in Cain, Abel, and all those that come after them from their relatives in their times. And He said that a third son was born to Adam, and he was in His Own likeness, after His image. And his father and mother called him Seth. And his mother said: "For God has appointed

me another seed instead of Abel, for Cain slew him" (Genesis 4:25). And after him, Enosh was born, and it was said that he was an idolater, even though his father was complete, for there is nothing to prevent a righteous to come out of a wicked or a wicked out of a righteous. For every man has the permission to be either righteous or wicked. And after that, it was recalled for us how many days lasted the life of each one of the ten heads of the generations, which were from Adam up to Noah. And they are Adam, Seth, Enosh, Kenan, Mahlalel, Jared, Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech, and Noah. And Noah was the tenth to Adam, and he begot three sons – Shem, Ham, and Japheth. And it further recalled the matter of the combination of the children of God with the human girls and their generations, for "The same were the mighty men that were of old, the men of renown" (Genesis 6:4) – which are the children of the *Nefilim*. And it began to inform us that the Lord sees the human deeds. And when He considered them after their increase, He saw "That the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Genesis 4:5). And immediately, it was said: "And it repented the Lord that He had made man on earth, and it grieved Him at His heart" (Genesis 6:6). And He set His mind to blot them out from the face of the earth. And so, it was written: "And the Lord said: I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the earth" (Genesis 6:7) – i.e. I will wipe him out from his root, for he was created from the earth. As it was said, "Then the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground" (Genesis 2:7). Here, it was said, "Whom I have created" (Genesis 6:7), to bear witness about what was said: "And God created man in His own image" (Genesis 1:27) – i.e. the purpose of his Creation was for him to have an image, and they did not

keep the purpose. Therefore, they should be blot out. For it was said because of the image: "And breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul" (Genesis 2:7) – and so with all the rest of those created beings in his world, which are the animals. And they are the beasts, the creeping things, and the fowls, which were created for him. Therefore, they faulted with him. And He said about all of them: "For it repents Me that I have made them" (Genesis 6:7). And His combination [of man with the animals] in the blotting out of the animals is for ordering that, if man does not keep the purpose for which he was created, he is equal to the beasts, and he is lost like them. And so, it was written: "Man that is in honor does not understand; he is like the beasts that perish" (Psalm 49:21). And therefore, it was said about Noah, who was righteous and wholehearted: "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord" (Genesis 6:8); "For His eyes are upon the ways of a man, and He sees all his goings" (Job 34:21).

Behold all that came from the entire Creation and from man, who is its essence. And its seal was written in order to inform through it about the Wisdom of the Lord for man, and about the combination that is between them [man and the animals]. The keeping and the supervision that come from the Lord upon him are in the consideration of the judgment if he will either keep His precepts or not, in order to reward or punish him according to the straight judgment. This is the rule that was included in Portion *Bereshit*, and it informed us according to what is seen from the simplicities of its words about the matter of the entire Creation, whose generality is man. And [it informed us] that he was one and unique, the first of his kind, even he committed sin before his Master. He died for his sin, and three sons were born to him. One of them, who is the

firstborn, killed his brother, for he was jealous that the Lord accepted his brother and was pleased with him while neither taking his offering, nor being pleased with it. Nevertheless, the sin of murder was forgiven with a small curse by which he was cursed. The Lord let us know by this that the intention is not found in one of these two. And when the third was born as a complete being, the human Creation was continued. And even though some of them sinned, the judgment does not allow [us] to judge the generality from the few. When all of them sinned except one, He set him as the first, and his witness are the ten generations – the decree in the Wisdom of His ordinances to blot out the entire species with what is drawn after its Creation for His use and benefit, keeping the one that is the most righteous in all the species so that he can further be the first of the entire first [human]kind. The matter of the remaining ones that are drawn after him continued due to him, and they are his sons, his wife, the wives of his sons with him, and the particular animal kinds, in order to keep their kind from the generality of those that were saved from the deluge according to what was included in Portion *Noah* – and also until Noah went with all those that were with him of the ark.

The secret of the inclusive sacrifice is a way of offering that the human beings do, and the way of the burnt offering is from Noah. But one of the offerings was from the fruit of the earth, and another was from the firstlings of his flocks and of the fat thereof. The first was unwanted and the second was wanted, for, concerning the two that brought them, one was a keeper of sheep, and the other was a tiller of the ground. The master of the burnt-offering was walking with God. And when he built an altar for God, took of every clean beast and of every clean fowl, and

offered burnt-offerings on the altar, his deed pleased [the Lord]. It was said about it: "And the Lord smelled the sweet savor, and the Lord said in His heart: I will not again curse the ground anymore, etc." (Genesis 8:21). Come and see how great is the power of the burnt-offering, which turns the wrath of the Lord to not destroy the creations. And the matter of the bloodshed gave a meaning by saying: "Whoso sheds man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed" (Genesis 9:6). Why? Because "For in the image of God made He man" (*ibid.*). The meaning of the bow, which is the token of the covenant about the flood by the way of an oath, was given about it by saying: "And the bow shall be in the cloud, and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant, etc." (Genesis 9:16). The matter of incest determined that its cause was the wine, and the beginning of its action was to reveal the nakedness. And from its bravery, a curse is renewed to them and their seed, while those who guard its matter are blessed. He wished to inform us concerning the matter of the generations of the children of Noah, their lands, and languages, and concerning the matter of the nations that differ from each other in many ways. And the cause of this is the place of their abode throughout the parts of the settled land. Also, with the distance of the people from each other the languages change a great deal, while with their closeness they will be very close, until they are alike and always drawn in this shape. Behold, if so, with the whole land having one language and unique things the closeness and the gathering was forced among the separated beings, as it is the custom of one nation, one language, and one opinion. With the change of opinions, a change of customs and the dispersion of the close things and their separation were compelled from these changes. And they drive away from each other in the essence of

distance. The languages become mixed, and the nations are scattered, as it happened to us in this matter of the exile. And so it is about the matter of the remembrance of the heads of the generations from Shem up to Abraham, which are ten generations. And they are Shem, Arpachshad, Shelah, Eber, Reu, Peleg, Serug, Nahor, Terah, and Abram, who is Abraham – the tenth. From Adam on, twenty generations were completed – ten and ten – to inform how much patience He has – blessed be He and blessed be His Name. About this, the prophet said: "Great in counsel, and mighty in work, Whose eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men, to give everyone according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doing" (Jeremiah 32:19). This is what was included in the two first portions of the *Torah*, which is the Genesis with Noah. And they were set as general prefaces to what was destined to be told us by the Lord from the matters of the fathers, and from their seed after them up to the birth of Moses of blessed memory – and up to the day of his death.

Behold, I have prolonged the matter of the two portions in their simplicities according to the intention of my writing, which was not written for discussing in it the simplicities of the *Torah*, but according to the generalities that we have recalled and to that which also comes from them according to their generality. I intended to take from its generality one particular according to the way of the concealed [method of exegesis]. And even if that particular will be inferred from many generalities, it is enough for me according to my intention. Now that I have included these two portions according to their simplicities – for I have gathered them due to the great closeness that is between both of their matters – I will begin to discuss about the way of their

secrets according to two ways – the way of philosophy and the way of the *Kabbalah*. And sometimes I will connect them, while sometimes I will divide them. Indeed, I will recall for each one in most places from which kind it is. And it is impossible for the particulars of the concealed things to be as the particulars of the simplicities, for it will come to be that under one simplicity there are many particulars of general, particular, and great wisdoms. And it will come to be that under many general and particular simplicities there is one particular wisdom. Concerning these, the writer will shorten and lengthen according to how the matter at which we aim about the thing will draw him. I will say after this that the beginning of what is worthy to learn concerning the subject of Creation according to the way of research is that the opinion of someone with intellect can bring no proof about the antiquity of the world or its renewal, for this knowledge is prevented from man by nature, and it is the stand of the intellect[ual realm]. The inclination towards any of the two opinions due to having heard strong evidences inclining the opinion towards one of them is a false inclination and a deceit of thought due to its weakness. What is actually right is to receive with it what comes to us from it in *Kabbalah* – from the mouth of the one that received [its] interpretation. For he also received the matter of Creation from the mouth of the Lord, as we have received it from him according to his words. There is none that will deny his words from the three complete kinds, which are the righteous, the pious one, and the prophet. And it should be perceived by none except them. Indeed, what we will receive from him as well according to the way of research is that about which it was said that it is according to what will be understood from the midst of his words when we will search for the wisdom in them. And it is that from the matter of the saying: "In the beginning God

created the heaven and the earth" (Genesis 1:1) – when He ordered that the entire world will have one beginning from which the things that are called 'heaven and earth' were created. And we will understand the matter of 'heaven and the earth', which determines the superior and the inferior. And we will understand the saying, "God created", according to the research – as if it was said that He created the First Cause for each one of the created things recalled in their generality.

Indeed, according to the way of *Kabbalah*, we shall say that he already received that the entire *Torah* is the Names of the Lord. And so we have also received from his mouth. We shall say that, if this is so, each one was created from Him in order to complete himself. And he will complete himself neither from the side of the world being ancient, nor from the side of it being new. But he will complete himself after his Creation, being lacking from the side of walking in the way of the righteous that keep the *Torah* out of fear, or from the side of walking in the way of the pious ones that keep the *Torah* out of love, or from the side of walking in the way of the prophets that keep the *Torah* out of fear and love – and they are in the essence of perfection. The way of completing the self of the righteous is to receive from the mouth of the complete [sage] any way that determined the matter of his own completion, after it will be made clear to him that the one from which he receives is a righteous, a pious, or a prophet. Indeed, the pious one – the master of research – will seek the Wisdom in the Creation, and the judgment is for him not to keep whatever is either ancient or renewed [from sterile traditions]. For that which he will see [with his own eyes] from the Wisdom of the Lord in it is enough for us, whether it is from today, from yesterday, or from

unfathomable days. For each and everyone of us master the research. And how will we achieve something that is unfathomable in its essence and truth according to the opinion of those that believe in antiquity? Indeed, the prophet will not investigate the whole *Torah*, but only what is enough to bring him to prophecy. For what does he care if the world is ancient or new? Its antiquity will neither add a virtue to him nor take a virtue away from him, and its renewal as well will neither add a virtue to him nor lessen his rung. For what was, was. And man was known, and his name was already called 'man'. And if so, that which will complete him is the matter of the Names. I hereby bring you a proverb about the way of the prophets, and I let it be a sign in the hand of the complete person that is from the seed of the children of Israel, who have the Holy Language – and it alone has the honor and the splendor among all the languages of the nations. And it [Hebrew] is all, all is for it, and all is in it. The proverb is this: Imagine that one man among the men of the Holy Spirit, the masters of the concept that invented the weighed rhymes, has sent you one riddle, which he has asked you to interpret for him.

"And he took up his parable, and said: Understand me and interpret for me the twelve human beings, which are *Nefashot*. As a devourer, they have chained me in tendons and blood."

And you, with the kindness of your idea, looked at his proverb and riddle. The beginning of the consideration of his words is to grow wise in what will be determined by the simplicity of the rhymes. Their simplicity is known and interpreted by whoever understands the Holy Language. And it is that the matter of his saying according to the simplicity is: "Understand me and interpret it for me". This states that he is asking from you to understand and

interpret his words as the one that does not know the matter about which he is asking, wishing to know it; or that he is as the one that knows the matter, comes, and asks for an interpretation, so that he will hear from you whether you know it or not. This is the way to consider a sage to be wise. His saying, "Twelve human beings", refers to the remark of the asker concerning what he asked when he decided the number of those being asked about; moreover, [it is about what he asked] when he told you about their essence by saying that they are human beings. His saying, "Which are *Nefashot*. As a devourer, they have chained me in tendons and blood", is because the *Torah* calls the human beings *Nefashot*. "Your fathers went down into Egypt with three score and ten *Nefashot*, etc." (Deuteronomy 10:22); "Give me the *Nefashot*, and take the goods to yourself" (Genesis 14:21) – and many like these. Furthermore, the *Nefashot* bond all the organs with tendons and send them the food, which is the blood. And this is the simplicity. Indeed, the explanation determines that he speaks about the twelve tribes that were forbidden to eat the sinew of the thigh vein and everyone else after them, as it was said: "Therefore the children of Israel should not eat the sinew of the thigh-vein" (Genesis 32:32). And the blood was also forbidden to them and to us, as it was said: "Therefore I said to the children of Israel: No *Nefesh* of you shall eat blood" (Leviticus 17:12). I have already informed you that the explanation is also from the kind of the simplicities, for it was intended for completing the righteous. Now that you know this matter with it and told it to him, there is no doubt that he will tell you: "Well done for considering and finding the intention of the explanation to which the writer, whoever he is, aimed at". Indeed, he will further tell you: "Open the eyes of your heart and see that there is another more excellent and

closer intention of the writer in it". Then, you will also grow wise in his words considering what is more subtle than the first [interpretation], and you will find in them the intention of the comparison, for his words were a riddle and a proverb according to the concealed way, which is taking the shape of philosophy for the twelve zodiacal signs. His saying about them, "Human beings", is [such] because they are powers created by the man upon the Throne, which is over the firmament above, as it was said: "And upon the likeness of the Throne was a likeness as the appearance of a man upon it above" (Ezekiel 1:26). In the dream of Joseph, his eleven brothers were already compared to the eleven zodiacal signs, and he was in the twelfth, as it was said: "Behold, the sun and the moon and eleven stars bowed down to me" (Genesis 37:9). And the solution of the dream came in the words of Jacob: "Shall I and your mother and your brethren indeed come, etc." (Genesis 37:10). And with his rhymes, this writer took the proverb instead of the comparison and the comparison instead of the proverb. For the proverbs and the riddles adhere to the intentions, since they have no need of always being a proverb – a proverb for each one of the special things. But it is possible for a proverb to be once a proverb for one thing, and once for another thing – and so are many. And it is possible for it to be set in the places of the proverb itself as a comparison, and also the other way around, for this is the way of the proverbs and the imaginations, which have no existence in themselves. And they do not have the special intention in them, but they are only by accident according to the persons that speak about them, and according to the time and the place. This is the secret of the flaming sword, which turns every way and keeps the way of the Tree of Life. Twelve proverbs are the rulers of the human beings, as if they were twelve human

beings themselves. It is known that all the ways of the human beings were divided according to the way of the seers into twelve houses, on which all the questions and answers depend. Therefore, he called them *Nefashot*, for all the powers of the *Nefashot* depend upon them. And they are *Nefashot* for the *Nefashot* of the human beings as well. He said: "As a devourer, they have chained me in tendons and blood". This was said as a proverb about the power of craving, which devours and always asks for more from its provider. He compared the power of hardness and softness with the tendon and the blood, for this is hard and that is soft. And the rhyming [poet] stated about himself by a proverb that he is chained and tied under the power of the zodiacal signs from the side of his body and from the side of his *Nefesh*. Indeed, his mind, by which he knew the house of bondage and what was chained in it by the other things (and they are the zodiacal signs, which drew, chained, and tied him organ by organ with the cords of the tendons and with the tempers of the blood), is that which unties all these bonds, for the complete sage will untie the solution of his riddle. And therefore, they rushed to awaken him to all this. Indeed, by the way of prophecy this rhyming [poet] will further ask from you a third intention in his proverb. And he will tell you: "You did well by seeing what you saw while considering the second way as well; you have hit it, but still did not touch my last intention".

Nevertheless, awaken from your sleep, which for me is still the sleep of foolishness. And observe with a clear, deserving, clean, subtle, and detailed consideration, and perhaps you will find the secret of my intention. Then, you will be forced to consider the third recalled way, which is the kabbalistic way for the sons of the prophets – and they are the prophesized. By considering this, you will find that

these rhymes are built upon the names of the twelve tribes, and they are the fifty letters that were included in their names. And they are these themselves "Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, and Benjamin (רְאוּבֵן שְׁמַעֲלֵין לְוִי יְהוּדָה דָּן נָפְתָּלֵי גָּד אַשְׁר יְשָׁכֵן זְבָּלָעַן יְסָרֵף בְּנִמְיָן)". Indeed, they are combined in the rhymes without an addition of a letter and without a lack. This is truly the way of the Names that brings those who prophesize in it and those who walk within it to prophesize – with God's help. Indeed, there are many other things under this, and they are parts and details for its kind, as for example the acronyms, whose number is 'recall [you]' = תְּזִיכָּר (627). And it is [=] *ThRK*"Z (תְּרוּכָּז). And the word endings in their number is 'do not forget' = אַל תְּשִׁכְחָה (759), which is [=] *ThShN*"T (תְּשִׁנְתָּם). And it is their midst as well, whose number is 'they are Names' (הֵם שְׁמָרִתָּא = 791), which is [=] *ThShTz*"A (תְּשִׁצָּא). Their secret is [=] 'the lamp of Israel' (נֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל), and the three matters in their number equal *QO*"T (קְעֵט = 179). And their secret is [=] 'Garden of Eden' (גַן בְּעֵדָן). And the rule is: 'Recall *Mem*"*He* (45)' = תְּזִיכָּר מֵה (759). Such as these, there are many also in the rhymes of the *Gematrias*, and many combinations aim from the rhymes at the steps in the way of prophecy within them while writing them. Behold, he aimed at the first speech, which is, "Understand me", in its combination – 'the building of *Y*"*H*. And the proof is his saying afterwards, "And interpret for me", whose secret is explicit. And he wished to say: "Understand me and interpret for me the explicit building of *Y*"*H*. Moreover, "Understand me" equals *Yud*"*Bet* (12) explicit and interpreted [Names]. Behold, [=] 'this' (הֵת) is explicit, for it is that which was

recalled with the twelve [human beings] according to the Name of Twelve [letters]. And furthermore, "Understand me and interpret for me the number of the children of Israel", is their number. Indeed, the twelve human beings are 'all' (כ"ל = 50) the Gates of Understanding, and the sign of [=] 'all' will be fifty in number – [=] *Nun*. And the sign of 'human beings' (בנ"י אד"ם = 107) is [=] 'Adonai is in them' (אָדוֹנָי בָּם), if they reach to know Him. And if not, they are lost. His saying, "Nefashot", is his matter for 'all of them are Names' (כלם שמורות = 836) concerning the number of [=] *Nefashot* (נֶפֶשׁוֹת). And this is the secret of the *Neshamot* (נְשָׁמוֹת = 796), for [=] 'they are the Names' (ה"ם השמורות). Behold, their secret – the letters of the tribes – is *Nun* (50) Names. And so, they are *Nefashot*, they are Names whereof the Names come, and the Names indeed come from them. And this is a great and explicit secret. And so, it was written: "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favor rather than silver and gold" (Proverbs 22:1) – by the way of "I know you by name, and you have also found grace in My sight" (Exodus 33:12). And behold, loving favor has been chosen. And know it, for it includes the *Yud* (10) holy Names. 'And as a devourer' (ונזוליל' = 99): [=] 'This includes' (ז"ו כויל') one *Kollel* [one to be added to the numerical value of the word, and representing the word itself in the count]. And behold, it is, "They have chained my body with Capricorn and Aquarius" – "They have chained me with tendons and blood". For behold, Capricorn and Aquarius are the houses of Saturn, which is the planet of Israel. Concerning these ways that are hinted at here, a man [once] gave me a proverb written in this way, and I will write it here on his behalf.

[This is] the story of the beloved twelve tribes

Take wine with wine by playing.

With *Yud*"*Bet* (12) zodiacal signs and with three fathers.

And the judgment of a precious combination [is to be] a gem for her head.

I have told his words and found that he added to the matter of the tribes of Jeshurun, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, which are *Kaf*"*Bet* (22) letters. The first ones, which were fifty, were all equal to *Ayin*"*Bet* (72) letters, as it was recalled in the *Torah* about the stones, which are: "According to the names of the children of Israel" (Exodus 39:6). This prophesized rhyme also aimed itself at what the first one himself aimed at, for both have one only way in this. Behold, I have already informed you about the matter of this third way. And if you wish to prophesize, you have to walk in it and in everything that we recalled and that is drawn from it. Now that I have awakened you to these three ways that include the opinions of the righteous, the pious ones, and the prophets, I will say that there are many things that are tied and drawn according to the simplicity, for there is no power in the human intellect to tie them in that continuum by speaking about them according to the concealed [way]. For the concealed things are general in necessity, while the simplicities are in particular. And this is because all the simplicities are built on the feelings, such as the particulars, which are achieved by those who feel. Indeed, all the concealed things are built on the general intellectual matters, and it will be compelled from this that the simplicities have many parts that do not tolerate to be tied with the continuum of the concealed [things] by the way of research, but only by the way of *Kabbalah*. There is neither letter nor point that does not have a great and

eminent place, as we said in the matter of the “Curled locks” (Songs of Solomon 5:11). For even the tip of the *Yud* has amounts and amounts of laws (*Halachot*). And so it was said about the tower that blossomed in the air, about which three hundred laws were said. And it is the neck of the *Lamed* that rises above all the letters. It is known that it has in it three hundred thousand and tens of thousand of laws – and even more multiplications of multiplications. If so, all that we shall discuss about according to the secrets of the research will be in the likeness of the one that solves dreams, after he received the prophecy that that way was the way to solve the proverbs and the riddles. For all the simplicities, the explications, the teachings, and the tales are proverbs and riddles according to the opinion of the whole and pious philosophers. The philosopher will consider the simplicities and know that they are things that are told to fools. And his statement about this is that the simplicity holds in its midst matters that are known in the beginning of the thought, and it is not the intention of the writer to inform about their simplicity. This is as the matter of Adam and Eve, and the serpent. For if these three particulars are taken in their simplicity, it will be appropriate to laugh at them in the beginning of a thought according to the nature of mankind. The *Torah* did not aim at words of laughing, but it did aim at concealed wisdoms, to reveal them to us in order to complete our lack with their knowledge. The sages have already hinted at this by saying that the Lord used to laugh at a camel and ride it. And this speech explains the perfection of the wisdom of our pious philosopher and sages of blessed memory. It is because, when the sage sees that the simplicity is not tolerated by his mind, he considers its internality. And he knows that each speech can be brought out of its simplicity. Even though the speaker is a gullible that did not aim at it, but only at its

simplicity, what is the difference between the sage and the fool if not this thing? For the opinion of the sage includes himself; and it further includes the opinions of all the gullible in the world; and it also includes the opinions of a few sages – and they are those whose wisdom is below his wisdom. Moreover, when a greater sage than him is found, behold, the opinion of this recalled [sage] will be included under the knowledge of this second one, who grew wiser more than this first one – and all the more, if so, it is appropriate to bring out the words of a sage or the words of a prophet from their simplicity, if the mind cannot tolerate them. Behold, our sages said in the *Midrash* that, when the serpent came to Eve, it cast on her filth. Concerning Israel, which stood on Mount Sinai, their filth stopped. Concerning the nations, which did not stand on Mount Sinai, their filth did not stop. How should a sage call any man in the world from among those thinking that this matter is as its simplicity, and that serpent recalled in the *Torah* came to Eve? And behold, the *Torah* did not recall [say] it. The sages that recalled it brought it from the secret of the saying of Eve, who said: “The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat” (Genesis 3:13). And the matter of eating in that entire metaphor of the Tree of Knowledge is the matter of the intercourse, as in the saying: “She eats, and wipes her mouth, and says: I have done no wickedness” (Proverbs 30:20). And as such, the matter of the knowledge is from the matter of “And Adam knew his wife again” (Genesis 4:25); “And the man knew Eve his wife” (Genesis 4:1); “And he knew her again no more” (Genesis 38:26); “A virgin, neither had any man known her” (Genesis 24:16); “Can I discern between good and bad?” (2 Samuel 19:36) – and many innumerable [passages] such as these. The judgment decrees that we should first discuss these matters by the way of research, and then by

the way of *Kabbalah*, as we have intended above. And truly, it is impossible to speak about one of these two ways so that the one growing wise in them can observe and understand from them our intentions, but [it will be possible] only after we will give one general offering upon which all our words will be built. And it is this.

You, the man researching the wisdom or walking the way of *Kabbalah*, should know that all the sages coming from the ancient sages of Israel of blessed memory call the wisdom of nature Work of Creation (*M'aše Bereshit*). There is no question concerning this between the philosophers among the sages of the nations and them. Indeed, the doubt that falls between them is referring to the Work of the Chariot (*M'aše Merkavah*), and it is that the philosopher calls Work of the Chariot everything that is included in the divine wisdom according to the way of the wheel-like deeds and their leaders from what is after nature. And the kabbalist calls Work of Creation and Work of the Chariot as they will be called by the philosopher himself, such as from the side of the beginning of the natural existences and what is after the nature as well. But the kabbalist adds to this by calling Work of the Chariot the ways of the Names, their combinations, and all that is drawn after them. This is what is not revealed to the philosophers of the nations. And they will deny that which they did not hear about it in the beginning of a thought. For that which will happen to a prophet mastering this way by wishing to confirm it to the pious one is that which will happen to the pious one mastering the way of research with the righteous one mastering the simplicity by wishing to confirm to him the concealed way. For he will deny it in the beginning of his thought. If so, when you hear from me anyone of the secrets according to the way of research,

consider it according to the truth of existence. If you hear from me anyone of the secrets according to the way of *Kabbalah*, consider it according to the truth of the ways concerning the combination of the letters, the Names, and what is drawn after them from the generality of the speech. Know that the philosopher will consider the creature and the drawing, while the kabbalist will consider the thing that includes book, story, and storyteller – and also the creature itself – in the drawing, as the master of the Book of Formation of blessed memory told us when he said that all is included under one Name. As he said, all the speech and all the creature[s] emerge in one Name. Now that I have given you this offer, which is small in quantity and great in quality according to our intention in this writing, I will return to my first intention. I will discuss the secrets of the two first portions that include the Work of Creation, the Work of the Chariot, the rule of the matter of the particular and general man, and the parts of his kind according to the way of the research – and grow wise in it a lot!

You, the philosopher and pious man that loves wisdom as it is, behold and see the ways of the Lord that are said in the essence of wisdom and how He ordered us in the beginning of His words that man is obliged by a divine obligation according to his humanity to know the matter of Work of Creation, which is the wisdom of nature! For from this knowledge he will ascend to another that further obliges man with an even bigger obligation than this, until he will go from a rung to another and achieve the active intellect according to the opinion of every philosopher and also every prophet. Even though what He explained to us was in the likeness of the number of the building of one house, for the entire world also resembles one house, also the human body resembles one house or one city, as it was

said: "There was a little city, and few men within it" (Ecclesiastes 9:14). And this is a metaphor about the human body. Behold, for man the entire world is a metaphor of him. And indeed, man is a metaphor for the world. We should now say that the house is built from changing matters, and it is entirely made of one shape. Its master builds it when he is a builder that is wise and rich in the essence of what is possible to do from the good things, the beauty, and the ornaments. Think that, after he built it and it pleased him, he began to tell the story of building the house to one of his honorable lovers. And he told him everything – a little according to the way of the generality, and a little according to the way of the particularity. His lover, since he knew the virtue of the landlord and his great wisdom – which he saw in the building of his house – rejoiced a lot in telling in great detail what he saw in it with all that was told to him by its owner, the builder. This is so that the listeners will also know the virtue of this wise builder and love him. And therefore, it was said about this: "My servant Moses is not so; he is trusted in all My house" (Numbers 12:7). And He revealed to us with the word "My house" that He likened the entire world to one house, as we have compared it. For we drink His waters and bring evidences on which it is appropriate to rely from His words. Indeed, the saying concerning the building of the house, its matters, shape, characters, titles, pattern, and image is a matter that is known from the building of the house that was built by Solomon, and from the words of Ezekiel and the words of Ezra. Therefore, there is no need to tell [it] here according to where we are concerning the matter of the building of the house. Moreover, from the building of the abode wonders will be understood by this way. And as we have likened the building of the house, the matter of the story of its building, the beauty, and the good things for

the lover, so it is appropriate to believe that the Lord did with Moses concerning the building of the world, for the Lord told us from it all that could be received and understood by Moses. Moses is the one that told his lovers what he saw in the building of the world, and what the Lord informed him from it. And this is the matter that brought him to write all that he has written about the Work of Creation and the Work of the Chariot in the beginning of his words. This is also due to the fact that the details coming after him exist and are lacking, and their kind exists. The kind of the books also exists, and its details exist and are lacking when the books are divine. And the book of the *Torah* still exists in its kind, and its existence will also be eternal according to our belief with no doubt according to *Kabbalah*. Also, according to wisdom there is no way to deny its eternity. Even though the nations change, the languages change, and the writings renew themselves, "The world behaves as its custom" [this is a saying in Hebrew which actually means: Nothing new under the sun]. One thing that completes the three kinds of whole [persons] from humankind, as we have recalled, cannot be changed. And if it is thought that it changed, it is only according to the change of the three recalled kinds. The Christians say that their Messiah told them through his disciples that the book of the *Torah* is real, and it is appropriate to honor it, for its words are the words of the Living God (*Elohim Chaim*). But it has a few precepts in it that are not in their simplicity. This was thus due to known causes, and the one that grows wise in them will understand them easily, for they were devices to draw the heart of the fools to be untied from that [matter] they were tied to with ropes, which was a brave and divine bond, so that it will be easier for those listening – who do not know the essence of the evil inclination – to receive his

knowledge in what they wish to be confirmed to them. Indeed, it seems from his words that he asked to incline towards the way of the sages of research, and that these words of his towards this inclination were not sustained for the true sages of research. For he took a little and placed a little, and he did not say that the first way was entirely for the multitude. Nevertheless, it is appropriate to keep it with the multitude, which are the righteous among the people, for I have always recalled that it is appropriate to keep the three ways, since the three of them are true. But they have three changing rungs, and each one completes what is appropriate for it according to its essence, in order to complete those that keep and know it. There is no doubt that among the Christians there are some sages that know this secret. And they spoke with me about it and revealed to me that this is their opinion with no doubt. Then, I have also judged them to be from the generality of the pious ones from the nations of the world, and there should be no rush towards the words of the gullible of any nation, for the *Torah* was given only to those that have knowledge. Behold, the testament from our young lads is that, as long as they do not have the knowledge, they are not Sons of the Precept (*Bnei Mitzvah*), even though it is appropriate to educate them in the precepts by the way of continuing the good habit up to the way of perfection. If so, the saying and the story about the building of the world before telling the matters concerning the details of the kind – and before the story concerning the mission of this complete writer that wrote the words of the book – were appropriate from the side of prophecy, from the side of wisdom, and from the side of judgment, so that they will complete the words of the writer that tells the building of this great house. [And they are] the three recalled kinds, which are the righteous, the sages, and the prophets. Being this what anyone who

questions or insists to speak about the matter of the perfection of the *Torah* and its eternity can, the change is compelled from either lack or addition. It is an addition and not a lack anyways, [for] it was said in it: "You shall not add thereto, nor diminish from it" (Deuteronomy 13:1). And it was also said in it: "You shall not turn aside from the sentence which they shall declare unto you, to the right hand, nor to the left" (Deuteronomy 17:11). It also appeared in *Kabbalah* that, even if you will be told that right is left and left is right, they will tell you nothing but the truth. But concerning you, lest you judge them with your gullibility being the opposite of judgment, the judgment decrees that you should rely on their opinion and not on yours. For they are the judges and you are the judged. And it is inappropriate to invert the divine intention returning the judge to be judged and the judged to being the judge, for the destruction of the world would be compelled from it. About this, it was said that the Lord gave from His wisdom to those that fear him, for the sages lead the gullible. And so is the way of the entire existence according to all the opinions, for the intellects that are separated from any matter are leading the wheels [of those] whose knowledge is below the knowledge of their leader. And this is the decree of the *Torah* about each thing.

The order of *Bereshit*

It seems to me that I have already revealed to you the whole *Torah* in its generality, but I should further discuss it according to the details of Wisdom that are in a few places in it and that were revealed to us from it. Therefore, I will say that, according to Wisdom, the details of Creation came in order. For, after it was said that the heavens and the earth – which are the surrounding, the surrounded, and what is between them – have a divine beginning, the Lord – blessed be He – established for us that His existence is compelled by the existence considering itself [pondering itself], by saying that the heavens and the earth – which are the created [things] – are those that have a beginning; but He – blessed be He – has no beginning, for He is the beginning of all. It is appropriate to consider Him according to the way that one should consider the created [things], for the considering person is from their generality, and by considering the created [things] the matter of the Creator's existence and His virtue will be achieved – as the matter of the builder's existence and his virtue, which is achieved by way of metaphor. [And this metaphor] was the building of the house and learning about it. According to the details of Formation, He will inform us about the truths that are in the wisdoms – which are in each one of them. Indeed, man should grow wise the most in the matter of the essence of mankind. Therefore, Moses shortened the matter of Creation and included it in a few things that can suffice according to the generality/rule and the intention in them. So did Ezekiel when he recalled the Chariot: He shortened it in the essence of shortening, and he stated at the end that his intention while discussing it was because of the order of the

supervision that the Lord has for mankind and because of the type of His details according to what they are. And so did Moses when he reached the Creation of man: He recalled its matter in general, and then he returned and gave it in detail; and he recalled his Creation in his place and explained the intention in creating him. He continued according to the way of simplicity in all this. He bonded together wonderful matters, and he concealed the wisdom in them with combined Names and with dreadful and frightening metaphors and riddles. He began the explanation after the saying: "And there was not a man to till the ground (...) but there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground" (Genesis 2:5-6). The mist was taken from the earth, for the secret of the earth (*אֶדְמָה*) is the 'mist of essence' (*אֶדְמָה מֵה*). And this is according to the wisdom, but according to *Kabbalah* mist is from mist. And they are the *He* (5) powers created from *He'Alef* (ח'א = 6) powers. And due to the fact that one power is general and four are particular, the Lord called it 'mist' (ת'נ = 5). The proof is the river about which it was said: "And a river went out of *Eden* to water the garden, and from thence it was parted, and became four heads" (Genesis 2:10). And watering the entire face of the earth was recalled here, and a watering of the garden there. And this is a hint answering to the revealed and concealed powers of world, and to the powers of mankind, which is entirely one single kind divided into four parts. The Name of the rivers testifies about them according to the way of derivation, for the Name of the first is *Pishon* (פִישׁוֹן), and it is the most excellent among all of them. And this Name was derived from two expressions – from 'mouth' (פֶה), from 'sleep' (שִׁינָה), and from 'witty' (שְׁנוּן). This is the kind of prophet whose mouth is witty and always speaks, even while he is asleep. Therefore, He recalled the

encompassment and encirclement of a known land whose name is *Havilah* (חוֹילָה), and it is a Name derived from 'he will say' (יֹחַה) and from 'night' (לִילָה) according to our ways. And it is the whispering and saying speech at night. Behold, our matter is as the matter of *Pishon* itself. And indeed, His saying about the place where gold is – "And the gold of that land is good, there is bdellium and the onyx stone" (Genesis 2:12) – will testify that this place is the most excellent among them, for He did not recall something like this about its friends. It is known that the name of 'gold' (זהב = 14) is derived from 'this love' (זהב), and in *Gematria* it is also [=] 'loved' (אהוב). And so, silver is from 'yearning' (כּוֹסֵף), and the *Middah* (emotive attribute) is because all love gold and yearn for silver. Indeed, 'copper' (נְחַשָּׁת) was derived from 'rest' (מנוחה) and from 'retained' (שִׁתָּה), for both are about resting. Moreover, 'iron' (ברזל) is derived from 'Creation' (בריה) and from 'inexpensive' (זול) – i.e. an inexpensive Creation that is worthless and contemptible. Behold, tin differs from the virtue of its friends, and the derivation of 'lead' (עופרת) is interpreted from 'ashes' (עפר). Indeed, quicksilver is also called as such because of its resemblance in its movement to animals. And its appearance is nice-looking. And behold, 'glass' (זכוכית) is from 'merit' (זכות) and from 'purification' (זכון). I have written the names of the metals in order to explain the derivation of name of gold and the change of *Zain* into a *Tzaddi*. And about calling it yellow, this was already recalled. Behold, gold was called 'good' to testify about the essence of the intention, which is in the first rung, for 'good' was said about all the essences of the created [things]. The saying, "There is bdellium and the onyx stone" (Genesis 2:12), testified that this place was the place of gemstones, and a place in which

it is appropriate to live more than in the other places, for they are the matters that are loved by all. 'Bdellium' (בדלָה) according to its derivation is 'moist' (לְחָה) and 'cloth' (בד), and its interpretation is a moist branch that determines its proximity to the fruit, for prophecy is also about rungs. 'Onyx stone' (שָׁהָם) according to its derivation is 'from what was' (מן הייתה) and from 'rumble' (המִיחָה), for their owners spend much time to find them. But once they find them, their hearts immediately rumble for them, and all this is according to the way of Wisdom. Indeed, according to *Kabbalah*, the name of 'bdellium' is the whispering of blood, while the 'onyx stone' is the name of prophecy. And this is a kabbalistic testament of the *Torah* sustaining what we have recalled [our matters] according to the way of Wisdom. "And the name of the second river is *Gihon* (גִּיחוֹן)" (Genesis 2:13) – this is a metaphor for the gender of the pious persons, and it was derived from 'back' (גָּלָה) and from 'grace' (חָנָה), awakening [us] to the fact that they are bodies having grace. And they encompass and surround the beautiful place. Behold, these [words] are below the first: "And the name of the third river is *Chidekel* (חִדְקֵל)" (Genesis 2:14) – 'sharp' (דָּקָה) and 'easy' (קָלָה). This is the gender of the righteous ones that, even though they have wit, their understanding is easy. And they are below the [other] two. Therefore, 'encompassing' was not recalled about them, but [instead] 'going' was said about them by Him: "That is it which goes toward the east of Ashur" (Genesis 2:14). For they have a few prefaces concerning the matter we are considering. And they follow its way, but not surrounding it as the other two. "And the fourth river is the *Prath* (פְּרָת, Euphrates)" (Genesis 2:14) – their names will not be recalled, for He did not recall a name about it. And they are the multitude

of gullible and wicked persons, whose intention in their existence is to sustain their gender alone, as the existence of the rest of the animals that do not speak. Their intention is the Name *Prath* – i.e. to be fruitful and multiply. Behold, I have already revealed to you the secret of 'mist' (ת"נ = 5) and the secret of the river, for both of them water. And *Kabbalah* helps the wisdom with that which we have said about it. But the secret of 'And a river' (ר"גנָה = 261) is [=] 'a cycle' [=] (מִחוֹרָה) as well according to *Kabbalah*. And it was called 'a river' by the way of "Shall flow unto it" (Isaiah 2:2), which is from the matter of running. This is the matter of 'running' (רֹגֶן) in the 'land' (אָרֶן). And it is furthermore according to *Kabbalah*: "And a river went out of *Eden*" (Genesis 2:10). Mount Zion is a loyal witness, "To water the garden" (Genesis 2:10). And if it is toward the east, the Garden is the Sun, and they are the periods [of time]. And in the human body, it is a metaphor for the senses, and the sense of touch is the generality. "And from thence, it was parted, and became four heads" (Genesis 2:10) – for all of them touch with their power. And they are four rungs. And so, this is a metaphor for the inner powers of the *Nefesh*, which are 'mist' (ת"נ = 5) as well. Our Rabbis of blessed memory said that it is a metaphor for the four kingships, which are under the general kingship of Israel. Some said that it is a metaphor for the four holy living beings whose likeness was the likeness of the face of man. And the general [man] is above the Throne: "And upon the likeness of the Throne was a likeness as the appearance of a man upon it above" (Ezekiel 1:26). Indeed, some of the masters of wisdom said that it is a metaphor for four powers that are separated from each other. And they come from the Wheel from one general power, for each one is above another. There are those that said that it is a metaphor for the four kinds of

combined [elements] themselves, for the combination of the earth includes them. Indeed, with no doubt what was agreed upon by all the sages – the sages of research – is that they said that it is a metaphor for the First Matter, and that it is a river that goes out of *Eden*. The *Eden* is called the brightness of active intellect, for it is the cause for the existence of this lower matter through the Wheels, and their movement and powers. The matter was parted and became four heads. They are the four elements, which also have four rungs. According to the concealed *Kabbalah*, it is further a metaphor for the four divine *Middot* that were included under one general *Middah*, which is the head of the leadership and supervision. They are known from the Writings, for it was said: "Yours, O Lord, is the Greatness, and the Power, and the Glory, and the Victory, and the Majesty" (1 Chronicles 29:11). For the four of them were included under the *Middah* of greatness for the one that understands. And the *Middot* of man spread out from the divine *Middot*, and they are also known within the *Nefesh*. Know that with all this it is not prevented for the intellect [to realize] that the river with its four heads can be things that are found as they are in the land. Indeed, since we said that it is a metaphor for these many existing matters, the listener might think that this way is not important. For how will one metaphor be said for many compared [things]? Even though all of them endure the explication and the interpretation, the intention concerning the one that compares is for one compared [thing]. Every sage knows that the matter of the metaphor is easy to be understood, but its comparison is very difficult and sometimes so deep even in its shape (see Rashi on Leviticus 26:1). For it sets the compared [thing] so that the wise intellectual will not be able to understand its idea until the chapter headings concerning it are given to him.

Indeed, the true first way is to understand it by the doubtful way, until it will be truly known if it is a metaphor and if it is in its simplicity. After this knowledge, we should ask if the compared [thing] to it is the metaphor, and this will be understood by the intellectual when he sees that there are things in the metaphor that are prevented by existence or that are close to them. That which does not have the possibility to exist is enumerated in the written prohibition concerning the simplicity of things, [and] there is no compulsion leading us to bring out that written [thing] from its simplicity. Therefore, we must bring out the matter of the serpent and all that is bonded to it from its simplicity, for the *Torah* did not recall that the serpent spoke to Eve in a dream, or also while she was awake by the way of a wonder. For what the *Torah* recalled was also a wonder that should not be pondered thinking that it is a metaphor. But we should consider its shapes, and they will show us the way whether it is a simplicity, a metaphor, or a wonder. And with them, we should exit the doubts. If so, in the saying, "Then the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul" (Genesis 2:7), *He* (5) [from] 'the man' (הָאָדָם) – which is the 'He of the awareness' (הָאָדָם הַיְדִיעָה), *He Ha-Yediah*) – will be figurative for the pondering person, for the name of man in this place and others alike is a name representing the entire gender. And it cannot be a name for this particular person, for his name *Adam* is a [general] noun [*Adam* means 'man']. For the noun in the Holy Language does not tolerate the 'He of the awareness' in any way in the world. For we did not find 'the Abraham', 'the Isaac', 'the Jacob', and those that resemble them such as Ben Ezra of blessed memory, who recalled in his honorable explanation the noun that does not receive four things [essences,

meanings]. We have said that their sign is 'orchard' (פָּרֶד, *Pardes*): *Peh* is action; *Resh* is the multitude; *Dalet* is knowledge; and *Samek* is relying. And all are known from his book. If so, in the saying, "And the Lord God planted a Garden eastward, in *Eden*, and there He put the man whom He had formed" (Genesis 2:8), this man is also a figure. You will understand from here that even one letter in the entire matter is figurative, for by it man understands everything – and all the more so if the name of a word is figurative, or many words, or one [whole] matter. If so, it will be inferred from man's name – which is a matter including his entire kind – that the name of Eve is so as well. Even though it is a noun for her, is a matter that includes her whole kind. And the figure is as the saying about her: "Because she was the mother of all living" (Genesis 3:20). And it did not say that she was the mother of all men. This is what brought the sages of research to believe that the name Eve is a name for the matter, while the name *Adam* is a name for the shape. And the name of the serpent is a name for the awakening power, while the Garden is a name for the whole body, for it has changeable organs as the Garden has changeable Trees. And the Tree of Life within the Garden is a name for the materialistic intellect, while the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil is a name for the power of touch, by saying: "Neither shall you touch it" (Genesis 3:3). And it is what awakens the power of lust for the intercourse, as every man feels this. And about the two Trees within the Garden, the first is the middle one, while the second is the midst of that midst. According to this, the river will be a metaphor for the powers of the body, and it will not be denied by the intellect that one metaphor is related to many matters that resemble one among the kinds of wisdom. For the whole intention is to reveal the secret of existence from all sides.

Now that this was said about the way of wisdom, it is appropriate to know that *Kabbalah* does not deny that which was revealed by wisdom, for between wisdom and *Kabbalah* there is nothing except the fact that *Kabbalah* was told from the mouth of the active intellect, which is deeper than the way wisdom was told – with both tales coming from its mouth. If so, *Kabbalah* is a more subtle achievement and a deeper wisdom than the wisdom achieved through the materialistic intellect. And therefore, the sages receive from the prophets. You should not be misled by the saying of the one stating that the sage is better than the prophet, for this saying is true, but its matter is that the sage sees what he sees and understands what he understands through the wisdom [coming] from his own knowledge. And the prophet, by seeing what he sees, he sees it through his fellowmen. Therefore, it might be said that whoever sees what he sees through his knowledge is better than the one that sees through his fellowmen. Behold, if so, according to these ways that we have recalled from the ways of wisdom, all that is connected to them concerning the matter of taking man and placing him in the Garden of *Eden* to work and keep it, and him being ordered not to eat from the Tree of Knowledge while all the other Trees of the Garden including the Tree of Life were permitted to him, and the intimation concerning his punishment by death and all that is bonded to it, [all] will be quickly understood according to wisdom, for all this concerns the human gender. And after [Adam] represented the entire species, He began opening the opening of many images, saying: "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helpmate for him" (Genesis 2:18). And it is as if He wished now to conceal what was interpreted concerning the matter of the gender, returning it to the particular man and woman, and to their particular

Creation. The particular matter will be thought by the way of wisdom according to the existence of the particularity of each man from it. If so, there is no need to prolong its matter, for all will be understood from what is recalled. And the particulars are unfathomable, and the curses are known from the nature of mankind standing against the divine intention concerning the existence of the details of the gender. And the Rabbi [Moshe Maimonides] already hinted in the Guide [for the Perplexed] at the matter of "In the beginning" [Genesis] in the second part, chapter thirty, through deep and subtle hints. And they are enough for the righteous, with them wishing to be drawn after the ways of wisdom in everything that was revealed to the sages by wisdom according to the secret of its matter, the matter of the offerings, the sons, and their names. All is a metaphor for the materialistic and spiritual powers, and the rest will be inferred by this connection itself. And the children of God are the powers of the Wheels. And according to *Kabbalah*, they are the rulers of the powers. And the daughters of man are divine powers. And according to *Kabbalah*, they are the diabolic powers, which are also good according to the consideration of themselves.

The order of the generations of Noah

“But Noah found grace” (Genesis 6:8). It is that the intention was in him, and in those that resemble him, his generations, and all that is related to his matter concerning the ark, etc. And all was a metaphor to what the whole person should do in each generation: He should be separated from the wicked people of the generation and make for himself an ark of gopher wood, so that he will be saved from the hand of the many waters, which are the malicious waters – and they the flood in which the wicked were sunk. They should sacrifice for a burnt offering in order to bring down the superior powers through the power of the Names according to *Kabbalah* and through the many educated thoughts according to wisdom. And the bloodshed of man himself is a greater transgression than shedding the blood of his fellowmen, “For in the image of God made He man” (Genesis 9:6). And the covenant of the rainbow is the secret of prophecy according to *Kabbalah*, while according to wisdom it is the likeness of a divine materialistic abundance that is poured down from a divine spiritual abundance. And therefore, it was said: “And the bow shall be in the cloud” (Genesis 9:16). And here a token was said, and there a token was said: “And this shall be the token unto you” (Exodus 3:12). The planting of a vineyard for Noah and their saying in the day of planting that in that day he drank from his wine and in that day he revealed his nakedness is because the wine is the wine of the *Torah*. And the day that man plants its root, he immediately drinks and his nakedness is revealed in his wisdom. And it is the nakedness of existence and the nakedness of his essence. For he will then know that the truth of his essence is an intercourse, and that he is a man

that exists in his time and loses [his life] in his time. And if he could live for a thousand years, behold, he comes from nothing with him existing from something. And he will go to nothing with every part of him that is something but not for himself in the end. Concerning Shem, Ham, and Japheth, Shem is the intellectual power that grows wiser in the Names and also draws; Japheth is the living thing that feels, for he is also beautiful, and he is a helpful opening assisting Shem; and Ham is the power of heat from which the desire of the intercourse comes with all this: “A servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren” (Genesis 9:25). The matter of the generation of separation according to wisdom is interpreted from the town, from the tower, and from what was ‘lied’ (*שָׁנַחַק ר'* = 950) in their matter. And this is because the beginning of things was the statement of wisdom saying then: “And of these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood. And the whole earth was of one language and of one speech” (Genesis 10:32). For He ordered with this the essence of the languages and that all have one beginning. According to *Kabbalah*, it is the Holy Language, which is the mother of all languages. And so He said, and so He told what He told. Therefore, there was no need to inform us explicitly which one is it, even though the nature of existence leads to the division of the nations in the earth. For man is from the judgments of nature, and man will not live alone except for only a few days and in the case that his natural food, which is essential for the need of his life, will [not] be convened for him. Indeed, with the completion of man, he will understand that the intention of the languages is to find the existence of the active intellect that compels the human speech according to the Lord – blessed be He. And this is according to wisdom. But according to *Kabbalah*, the intention is also this, but it has an addition. And it is that

his matter of existence is not enough alone, until the achiever will achieve the speech and speak with Him as a man speaks with his friend. According to the way of wisdom, the existence of the intellect will be achieved with any language, but according to *Kabbalah* His speech will be achieved only with the Holy Language. Indeed, in the opinion of any complete kabbalist its existence will be achieved through any language. Behold, after "And it came to pass, as they journeyed east" (Genesis 11:2), when they journeyed from the antiquity of the world, there is "That they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and they dwelt there" (ibid.). 'A plain' (**בָּקָע** ה' = 172) is in *Gematria* [=] 'the Garden of *Eden*' (**גַּן עַד** ג' = 620); 'Shinar' (**שְׁנָר** ר' = 620) is in *Gematria* [=] 'wicked' (**רָשָׁע** ט' = 620). And about this, he recalled the east by saying that the Garden of *Eden* is in the east – i.e. they found the place of man's truth. And it is the place of wickedness, for "In the place of justice, that the wickedness was there, and in the place of righteousness, that wickedness was there" (Ecclesiastes 3:16); "For the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth" (Genesis 8:21) – which brayed in his existence, for it was awoken in his existence. The beginning of the division and the scattering is the distance in understanding the languages, as the saying: "And they said one to another: Come, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar" (Genesis 11:3). This is the judgment of the wicked that says that we should build for us and that we should make for us. For, behold, 'Shinar' (**שְׁנָר** ר' = 620) is [=] 'the name of the city' (**שְׁנָר** ר' = 620). And here are [=] 'the wicked' (**רָשָׁע** ט' = 620). The brick for stone is a tradition (*Kabbalah*) of the moon for the sun, the intellect for wisdom, and its opposite. The intention is that it is not in God's Name, and this is the secret of the work in Egypt with slime and bricks. The city is the body,

and the tower is the heart with its top in heaven, which is the brain of the head. And the saying, "Lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth", is because they are humans in general, and they are the wicked thinking that the city, the tower, the head, and the Name are theirs, and all was built for them. Therefore, the judgment was decreed for them to be scattered, with them being one people having one language among all. And their punishment is not to hear each other's language. This is because, if the organs would have understood each other, they would help each other in such a great way that there would be no way for sickness, or for the elements to quarrel. And perhaps, there would never be death. For the mixture that is in the elements of the seed is the cause of being, which is the same in the inversion of the cause of losing [one's life]. And with losing [one's life], the organs shatter. And from there, the Lord scattered them over the entire face of the earth. For here is the cause: "Because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth" (Genesis 11:9). And all depends 'on *Lamed*"*Bet* (בָּלֶ"בּ = 34): "Therefore was the name of it called [=] 'Babel' (בָּבּּל)" (ibid.). And *Kabbalah* testifies about this from each side. But all this matter that was said in the two portions that we included according to the simplicity and that we interpreted according to the wisdom with a little combination of the words of *Kabbalah* requires [us] to further return and bring proofs to confirm all this according to the Names as well. Indeed, if we would have taken this way speaking about it according to what we have received from it concerning the shape of the Names, the *Tzerufim* (combinations), the *Gematria*, the *Notareikun* (acrostics), and what resembles them from the ways of the *Kabbalah* – and all the heavens and all the days were ink, all the rods [and the lives] were quill pens, all the events/beams

were fingers, and each moment of our life would be as long as the years of Methuselah – it would not be enough for us to write what we have received in this kabbalistic way from the knowledge of the Names. All the more so, there are some [things] in them from what we have not received, and we know nothing about it. And with this [being so], how is it possible to talk at length about it? Indeed, to completely keep quiet about it is impossible as well. And therefore, we are required to discuss it by leaping. In the second book, which is the Book of Names, we will deliver a key in its ways for opening the gates of *Kabbalah* with a little more widened tongue [which will utter and thus explain more hidden things]. We return to say here that the beings are the Names. And therefore, they will not tolerate the Creation of the Name, for they are the beginnings. And so, the word 'in the beginning' (*Bereshit*) is a holy Name, and this is its way: *Yud* is ten; *He* is five; *Waw* is six; *He* is five; count the general and you will find that their truth is 'a being' חוי"ה (ה = 26). And behold, their secret is 'in the beginning' בראש"ת (ת = 913), and it is 'the holy Name' ש"ם הקד"ש (ש = 749). 'In the beginning' [is also] in another way in *Gematria* with the heads of the year, for in each *Rosh Ha-Shanah* [Jewish New Year] the world is judged. Also, it is with two heads, and it is the secret of 'the house of beginning' (*Beit Reshit*). And they are the matter and shape, and the word 'created' (*Bara*) will determine a lack about which it will also be said that it is a beginning of the accident. But the matter and the shape are the beginnings in the object/essence, and the saying 'God' אליה"ם (ם = 86) is in the whole Creation. And it will unfold the secret of the *Midda* (emotive attribute) that is for all, which is an including thing that was called 'the *Midda* of Judgment' מד"ת הדין" (ה = 513). And it is [=] 'the *Midda* of prophecy' מד"ת הנבואה" (ה), which meets whoever seeks to be

prophesized with no doubt in the beginning when he is judged – [to know] whether he will gain it [the World to Come] and he is worthy of it, or not. The witnesses of His Creations are the heaven and the earth. And so did He say at the end of the *Torah*: “And call heaven and earth to witness against them” (Deuteronomy 31:28). And in the Book of Formation, it was said that the heavens were first created from fire, the earth was created from water, and the air was created from wind, which decides in the middle. There, it was said that the head is created from fire, the stomach is created from water, and the corpse from wind, which decides in the middle. And here is the world [the Microcosm] with the organs as witnesses. It was further said there that heat was created from fire, cold from water, and dryness/saturation from wind, which decides in the middle. And this is the matter of time, which is also required in order to settle the moistures in the matter of prophecy. For “Is wisdom with aged men, and understanding in length of days?” (Job 12:12) – and you should understand this! “And ‘God said: Let there be light. And there was light’ (*אלֹהִים יְהִי אֹור וַיְהִי אֹר* = 556)” (Genesis 1:3) – two lights in two beings. And the former is the aiming one, while the second was compelled from the first. And this is why it was said *YH*”*Y* and *YH*”*Y*. Behold, light (*אור*) is *Alef Waw Resh* (= 623), [=] ‘a minister and champion’ (*שֵׁר וְאַלְוֹן*). And behold, it is [=] ‘the Holy Spirit’ (*רוּחַ הקָדָשׁ*), and its secret is [=] ‘man and woman’ (*אִישׁ וְאִשָּׁה*). And they are [=] ‘the creature and the shape’ (*הַיצֹּרֶר וְהַצֹּרֶת*) that have *YH* between them. *Yud* (י) is in the midst of ‘fire’ (*שָׁאָן*) – here is ‘man’ (*אִישׁ*). *He* (ה) is after fire – here is ‘woman’ (*אִשָּׁה*). [If] they are worthy, the Divine Presence is among them; if not, the Divine Presence departs from among them, and they

remain to be a fire devouring another. Behold, they are two things that have one Name, and the witness is, "Male and female created He them (...) and called their name Adam" (Genesis 5:2). Behold, Adam is one, they are two. 'And they are one' (וְהָم אֶחָד = 64) in the combination of 'Adam' (אָדָם = 45) and 'Eve' (חַרְמָה = 19). And behold, 'the first' (הַרְאֵשׁ = 562) [=] 'is the light of the intellect' (אָוֶר הַשְׁכָל). Indeed, the saying, "And there was evening and there was morning, one day" (Genesis 1:5), is about two beings that are one day, which is the judgment in the secret of prophecy. And with this, it was known that 'the man is Eve' (הָאָדָם חַרְמָה = 69), and the secret is [=] 'the vapor of the gesture' (אָדָם חַמְחָה). And it is the speaking power. And so, Adam and Eve are a vapor of a gesture, a speaking vapor, and all was built on this. But the matter of the cycles, the births, and the periods is hinted by speech as well, for the secret of 'making' (לְעֹשָׂה = 806) includes [=] AY''B ThShTz''G (א"ב תשצ"ג), and it is [=] 'for the hours' (לְשָׁעָרָה). But 'and God saw' (וַיַּרְא א"ר פ"ז אליה"ם = 303) is the sign of [=] HY''A RP''Z (ה"א רפ"ז) – 'the light' (אֶת הָאָרֶב = 613) [=] 'in the Torah' (בַּתּוֹרָה), [=] TRY''G (תרי"ג) precepts, 'that were good' (כַּי טָב = 47); [=] $\text{Kaf''Chet Yud''Tet}$ (כ"ח י"ט) are two cycles – Kaf''Chet (28) years of the cycle of the Sun and Yud''Tet (19) years of the cycle of the Moon, for both depend on the Torah. For all was created with the Torah, and all is good with the Torah. But without Torah, there is no good. Concerning the matter of the waters, it was not said in the second that it is good, and it was multiplied in the third because of the secret of the pure marble stones, which are 'the good inclination and the evil inclination' ($\text{יִצְרָר הַטָּב וַיַּצְרֵר הַרְעָע}$ = 903). And it will be considered concerning the matter of the division of the waters from the

waters through the hands of that in which the Divine Presence dwells. So, it was written: "But Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was" (Exodus 20:17). And it is the thick darkness, and it is 'the firmament' (הָרָקִיעַ = 385). And it is [=] 'the essence' (הָעֵיקָן), for it is the dividing [power]. It is the secret of God dividing the waters from the waters — between two things that are called by one single name. And they are two in our consideration — superior and inferior. It is this to which we have been awakened: 'Earth and water' (אָרֶץ וְמִים = 387), the [=] 'mother of the inclinations' (אָמֶן יִצְרָאֵל = 450) is [=] 'an abundance' (שְׁפָעָה), [=] 'a flying inclination' (צָרָה), [=] 'Firmament of heaven' (רָקִיעַ הַשְׁמִינִי = 935) is [=] 'the Name of the firmaments' (שְׁמַם הַרְקִיעָה), [=] 'the name of the *Nefesh*' (שְׁמַם הַנְּפָשָׁה = 453) is [=] 'the mouth of the serpent' (פָּנֵי הַנְּחָשָׁה), and the sage [=] 'will search' (יְחַפְּשֵׂנָה) for 'image and likeness' (צְלָמָם וְדָמָרָת = 616), [=] 'to study the precepts' (לִמּוֹד מִצְרָאָת). In the image of God, Abraham is really a man. 'The sixth day' (יּוֹם הַשְׁשִׁי = 671), there was [=] 'Jesus the Nazarene' (יֵשׁוֹן הַנְּצָרָי); 'the seventh day' (יּוֹם הַשְׁבִּיעִי = 453), there will be [=] 'the king Messiah' (מֶלֶךְ הַמְּשִׁיחָה) — [=] 'half the Name' (חַצֵּי הַשָּׁם) of the entire Name. 'God created by doing' (בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים לְעֹשָׂה = 1095); the word endings are 'truth' (אמת = 441). 'The heaven and the earth' (הַשְׁמִינִי וְהָאָרֶץ = 697), both were created as one. 'When they were created' (בְּהַבְּרָאָם = 250) [=] 'in Abraham' (בְּאַבְרָהָם), with *He* created *He* them. "In the

day that the Lord God made" (Genesis 2:4) – two *Middot*. The *Midda* of Mercy and the *Midda* of Judgment. Now, He combines them, but not in the Creation. 'God' = אלהי"ם (86) is [=] 'a complete YHWH (י"ה מל"א) (26), *Kaf'Waw Kaf'Peh Waw'Waw Adonai Elohim*. Behold, 'two Names' = שני"י שמי"ת (1106) are in *Gematria Yud Waw Mem* (112), [=] 'Waw days' (רו"ו כל"ם), [=] 'Waw vessels' (רו"ו דומ"ם), [=] 'Waw alike' (רו"ו מוד"ם). 'Earth and heaven' = אר"ץ ושמי"ם (687) are [=] 'rock, fire, and water' (שם"ת חי"ם), the 'breath of life' (צֶרֶר אֲשֶׁר מֵי"ם) (858), [=] 'two alive and dead' (שנֵי חַי וּמְת) (somebody) [=] 'living as an intellectual and dying (ח"י) – this is the scope of man. 'And man became a living soul' = וַיְהִי האָדָם לְנַפְשׁוֹ חַי"ה (564), a cantor, a messenger of the crowd, for those that send him are numerous. 'The Tree of Life' (ע"ז החיי"ם) (233) is the holy letters, which are 'as the end of wisdom' (כָּסְף הַחַיִ"ם), [=] 'as the end of life' (חַיִ"י הַעַצְמָה) (639) is [=] 'as the end of the essence/object' (כָּסְף הַחַכְמָה) (195) is [=] 'the life of the essence/object' (כָּסְף הַחַכְמָה) (649) is [=] 'the end of the life of wisdoms' (כָּסְף חַיִ"י המָרָת) (195) is [=] 'as the end of the life of death' (כָּסְף הַחַכְמָה) (195) is [=] 'as the end of the life of the Name, for it is the life of the essence/object. We have hinted at the matter of the river above, and it is enough. 'Good and evil' (טו"ב ור"ע) (293) [=] 'in the land' (בָּאָרֶץ) (83) is [=] 'against him' (בְּגֶדֶן) (195) is [=] 'his fate' (מִזְלָה) (195); 'slumber' (תְּרֵדָמָה) (649) is [=] 'the *Midda* of the essence/object' (מד"ת העצ"ם) (195). 'The rib' (הצל"ע) (195) is [=] 'the internal' (הפנימ"י) (195) is [=] 'concealed' (זֹאת הַפְעָם) (195) is [=] 'the end' (הַקְ"ם) (195). 'This is now' = זֹאת הַנּוּלָם (195).

603) is the rib. If so, [=] 'this rib' (זֹאת הַצְלָע) is [=] 'this encircling' (זֹאת הַקְפָּה). 'Bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: She shall be called Woman' (עצ"ם מעצמ"י) (2565) is [=] 'she shall be called Woman' (זֹאת יִקְרָא אֲשָׁה) (932). The love of this [man] is that 'she shall be called Woman' (זֹאת יִקְרָא אֲשָׁה) (1055). She shall be called 'the shape', for she is from man, from the creature. *Yud'Tet* (19) is [=] 'his father' (אב"ו) (47) is 'his mother' (אם"ו). 'And he shall cleave unto his wife' (וְדַבֵּק בָּאֶשֶׁתוֹ) (821), who is with him, 'and they shall be one flesh' (וְהַיְשֵׁר לְבָבֵו אֶחָד) (572); [=] 'and the heart of the straight is one' (נוֹחַשׁ) (358) is [=] 'the Messiah' (המשיח) (336). In *Gematria*, it is *Yud Shin Waw Ayin Resh Waw Mem* (1114) [the letters make up the words יְהִי שֵׁין וְעַיִן רֵשׁ וְרוֹם מֵם = 1114], 'Jesus is subtle', and it is 'more subtle than Jesus' (עֲרוֹם) (722), [=] 'subtle and enchanting' (עֲרָוָם) (195). And therefore, it was cursed. It is the 'fig leaves' (עַלְהַת תְּאַנְּהָה) (561), for he asks for a subterfuge from the Philistines. 'Girdles' (חֶגְרָת) (611) are the [=] *ThRY'A* (תְּרֵי"א) precepts of the *Torah*. 'The trees of the Garden' (עַץ הַגְּן) (218) are a decent advice. He is the head, and you are the heels, which is the secret of the head of the *Teli* (fulcrum) and its tail. It is 'in pain' (בָּעֵצֶב) (164) [=] 'with color' (בְּצַבְעָה) (610), and thorns and thistles of thistles [in every] generation. 'The herb of the field' (עַשְׂבָּה הַשְׂדָה) (686) is about [=] 'cows' (פרָה) (786); [=] 'for dust you are' (כִּי עַפְרָה אַתְּה) (195).

חַמְרָרָאשְׁרָוּן (שׁרְרָוּן = 805), the [=] 'first matter' [=] 'an everlasting covenant' [=] ברִית עֲוָלָם (ברִית עֲוָלָם = 758), [=] 'copper' [=] (מִשְׁחִית) 'destroying' [=] 'the day of circumcision' [=] ברִית המילָה (ברִית המילָה), [=] 'a birth of guarantee' [=] (מָוֶלֶד עֲרָבִית) 'an everlasting covenant' [=] (ברִית עֲוָלָם) between Me and all flesh, between Me and all flesh and blood, between Me and the 'angels of death' [=] (מְלָאכִי המָרָת) (מְלָאכִי המָרָת = 552), which are [=] 'flesh and blood' [=] (בְּשִׂיר וְדִם) (בְּשִׂיר וְדִם = 260) is [=] 'the box of blood' [=] (כָּרֶם) 'A vineyard' [=] (אַרְגָּז) (אַרְגָּז = 70), [=] 'blood and ink' [=] (דָם וְדִין) (דָם וְדִין = 386) is [=] אלָהִי שֵׁם (אלָהִי שֵׁם) 'the tents of Shem' [=] (אֲהָלֵי שֵׁם) (אֲהָלֵי שֵׁם = 409) language, [=] 'one' [=] (אַחֲת) (אַחֲת = 409) language, [=] 'the holy' [=] (הַקָּדָשׁ) (הַקָּדָשׁ = 413) language. And it is also a 'clear' [=] (בָּרוּחַה) language, and our language is multiplied – the Holy Language through the Holy Language. 'A brick for stone' (הלבנָה) (לבנָה = 175) is a brick for mortar, for man is 'a mortar, a mortar' [=] (חַמְרָרָה) (חַמְרָרָה = 896) of years. 'A city and a tower' [=] (כָּרֶס) (כָּרֶס = 363) are [=] 'paunch and beard' [=] (עַיר וּמְגַדֵּל) (עַיר וּמְגַדֵּל = 426) [=] 'from the tongue' [=] (לְנוֹן שֵׁם) (לְנוֹן שֵׁם = 385) of the tongue 'is one' [=] (שְׁפָה) (שְׁפָה = 409); [=] 'the holy' [=] (הַקָּדָשׁ) (הַקָּדָשׁ = 409); [=] 'is for all' [=] (אַחֲת) (אַחֲת = 120) [=] 'for the king' [=] (לְמָלֵךְ) (לְמָלֵךְ = 907); [=] 'and this is what they begin to do' [=] (וּזְהַחְלָם לְעִשּׂוֹת) (וּזְהַחְלָם לְעִשּׂוֹת = 481) [=] 'and the time' [=] (וְעַתָּה) (וְעַתָּה = 63) [=] 'their radiance' [=] (זִירָם) (זִירָם = 806) [=] 'to work' [=] (לְשִׁלְמָרִית) (לְשִׁלְמָרִית = 34) is [=] 'the heart' [=] (לְבָבָל) (לְבָבָל = 1126), [=] 'the language of the whole earth' [=] (שְׁפָת כָּל הָאָרֶץ) (שְׁפָת כָּל הָאָרֶץ = 1126), [=] 'the

לשׁוֹן קְדֻשָּׁה מִהָּאָרֶץ (צ). 'Sarah was barren' (= שָׁרֵי עֲקָרָה 885), [=] 'the minister of the firmament' (= שָׁרֵר הַרְקִיעַ צ), 'Chaldea' (= אֲרָרְכְּשִׁידְוָס), [=] 'the core of Ashmodai' (= כָּרֵד אַשְׁמוֹדֵי), [=] 'a ball of fire and blood' (= כָּדְרֵר אָשׁוֹר וְדָם), 'into the land of Canaan' (= אֶרְצָה כְּנָעָן צ), [=] 'the end of the earth' (= אֶרְצָה כְּנָעָן צ 486), [=] 'killed them' (= חִרְצָן צ 258). 'Charan' (= קְרַצְנַן צ), 'the cedars' (= אֲרֹזִים צ), 'Armiz' (= אַרְמִיז צ), 'Hurmaz' (= הַוְרָמָז צ). Some of your parts, He created as the superior *Hurmaz*, and some of your parts He created as the lower *Armiz*, as it was written in *Sanhedrin*.

Behold, I have already completed the ways of the combinations and *Gematriot* in the two portions. You that consider, know what comes from this kind in *Sanhedrin* in the words of our Rabbis of blessed memory concerning the writing of the *Nashtwan* (נשׁתוּן), a royal scroll of authorities which was given to Ezra) in which it was said: "Why could they not read the writing?" (Daniel 5:8). The Rabbi said: "I will write it for them in *Gematria*: YT"Th YT"Th AD"K PW"G ChM"T (ט = 1009). And its interpretation is MN"A MN"A ThQ"L WPRS"Y"N, מנ"א תק"ל ופרס"י (Mene Mene Tekel U-Farsin = 1118) [Daniel 5:25]. And Samuel said: [=] ממתו"ס ננקפ"י (AN"M AN"M אאלר"ן). Rabbi Yochanan said: [=] AN"M AN"M LQ"Th NYSRP"W (אנ"מ אן"מ לק"ת ניסרפ"ו). Rabbi Ashi said: [=] NM"A NM"A QTh"L RWPSN"Y (نم"א NM"A QTh"L RWPSN"Y) (פרסין פוריסן). It is *Parsin Purisan* (נמ"א קת"ל רופסן). According to the law by the way of the *Kabbalah*. Whoever will be granted knowledge by the Lord will be able to bring out [an outcome] from the potential of the things that we have recalled in the two portions among the rest of the

ways in all the portions of the *Torah*. Therefore, we will shorten them as much as we can. And that which we are going to recall from each portion in the two ways – which are the way of wisdom and the way of *Kabbalah* – will be much even if it is little, for we rely on what preceded by prolonging the two recalled portions. Now, we begin to say according to the way of wisdom that the fathers are the Chariot and their witnesses are their *Middot*, for it was said: "You will show faithfulness to Jacob, mercy to Abraham" (Micah 7:20). The *Midda* of Isaac is the *Midda* of Glory, and it is called the *Midda* of divine Fear, for it was said: "And the Fear of Isaac had been on my side" (Genesis 31:42); "And Jacob swore by the Fear of his father Isaac" (Genesis 31:53). And it is the *Midda* of Judgment. And the *Midda* of Jacob is the *Midda* of Splendor, for it is truth. And the *Midda* of Abraham is the *Midda* of Generosity, for it is the mercy. And so, it was written: "Mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other" (Psalm 85:11). The world stands on three things – on judgment, truth, and peace. For it was said: "Execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates" (Zechariah 8:16). Truth includes the intellectual virtues, and peace includes the virtues of the *Middot*. The ordinance is combined from both of them, and it will be called the ordinance of righteousness, the ordinance of truth, and also the ordinance of peace. Now that I informed you about this in short, I will discuss what the rest of the ten portions that we have received include, from which we have separated the first two portions – and we ascribed the former to Adam and the latter to Noah. If so, we will ascribe the third to Abraham. And after this, two were drawn. Thus, they are three and two. And behold, they are five portions! The sixth is for Isaac and his brother, and also for Jacob with them in general. The prolongation of all

those stories concerning the fathers and the tribes was appropriate and had to be brought before the time of slavery and salvation. The matter of slavery and salvation had to be brought also before the giving of the *Torah*. For the essence of the intention in all of the preceding and late stories is to receive the *Torah*, and its matter is that, if there is no *Torah* there, there is no use for all the stories. And from this side, the stories of the *Torah* will also be [=make up] the *Torah*. And so will do the precepts of the *Torah* from their side of being combined with the *Torah*. Indeed, the reception of the *Torah* is the last essence, and it is that all those that precede us will receive their powers through its giving. And so will all of those that exist in our time with those that will follow us. For each man of us in every generation is able to say about himself, "For me was the world created", since each one of us is a world in himself – with him being a Microcosm. All the more so, it is appropriate to say about each one of the complete persons that they are a complete world, and that for them the world was created. Moreover, it is appropriate to say this about Abraham and those that resemble him. And if so, how could the story not be prolonged in the *Torah* concerning his matters in general with something of their details? For it was already known that the particular matters that occur to each man of mankind could not be included in books telling them all. But the matters that concern the roots of intentions are those appropriate of being told, for there is a benefit to be heard from them by the one that observes them. Their intention is not to be heard by him alone, for the intention of the precepts is not so that he keeps them alone. But the intention of the stories is equal to the intention of the precepts with no doubt. And this is because of the one hearing from the mouth of his fellowman – while he tells his words – that such and such happened to

such person concerning such a matter in such a place and in such a time; and that deed came into his hand in one of the days and it did not resemble the deed [that he have heard]. Behold, everything that he heard was in vain, and that rumor did not help him at all; it is as if he has never heard it! So is the one keeping a precept, when he keeps it with his organs and without his heart. Behold, it will be as if he never did it, for the Lord wants the heart [part]: "For man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart" (1 Samuel 16:7). Therefore, it was said: "In your mouth, and in your heart, that you may do it" (Deuteronomy 30:14) – in your mouth and in your heart first, that you may then do it. What was said – "Which if a man does, he shall live by them" (Ezekiel 20:11) – is to see His ordinance [respected], for it is not enough for a deed to be performed as you wish. For His saying, "He shall live by them", is for a matter of great remark, and all the more so in what appeared about it according to *Kabbalah* by saying, "He shall live by them". And it was not [said] that he will die by them, for this points out according to the concealed [way] that the man doing the precept should do it as a matter of a living being that feels what he does, and not as the dead that do not feel. And so, it is written: "And the living will lay it to his heart" (Ecclesiastes 7:2) – for the one that places the things and their end in his heart is the living being. And whoever does not do this, if so, is the dead, for he feels nothing from the essences that are appropriate to be considered and achieved. Therefore, whoever sees the written stories in the *Torah* and does not put them into his heart in order to know from them the intention of the one telling them resembles the one that listens to a song of fools.

The order of *Lech Lecha*

Therefore, if a man brings a thing out of its simplicity in order to complete the intention of the writer, it should be good in the eyes of those that listen. For example, we said about Abraham by way of metaphor that he is me, or that I am him. And [we said] the matter of his departure from his land, which is the place of fire – Ur Cashdim – going to the land of Canaan, which is also the land of Cham. Cham is the father of Canaan. And it was said: "Cursed be Canaan" (Genesis 9:25) – the just going to inherit his land, for Canaan is cursed and Abraham is blessed. Behold, the land that fell in the cursed part will return, and the blessed will inherit it. And it is a land flowing with milk and honey between this [cursed part] and that [blessed part]. For it was already said, "I will not again curse the ground anymore for man's sake" (Genesis 8:21), as it was said about the matter of Adam, "Cursed is the ground for your sake" (Genesis 3:17). If so, here is the blessed land. But its owners were changed, for this one was 'Cham' (חָם, hot = 48), and that one 'had mercy/womb' (רָחָם = 248). The secret is that this is 'a brain' (חַמָּה = 48) and that is the 'object of the brain' (חַמָּה מִעֵדָה = 248). And this is from *Kabbalah*, for the object is the object/essence of the planet. Indeed, the self of anything is its truth. And therefore, Abraham was sieved from the organ known with circumcision, and Cham was cursed from the father from the side of his nakedness. Behold with what this one was cursed the other was blessed. And therefore he inherited his land. All that was drawn after this according to the simplicity will be understood from what I have recalled in this generality. This is because the interpretation of one matter from the generality of roots will determine all the

roots, their branches, and their fruits. What we have recalled from the matters of simplicity in general will be inferred from this recalled topic, when we wish to put it as a concealed [thing] and reveal it in one or more matters. We will say about this that the matters of the sacrifices, the exile, the salvation, and the inheritance of the land are matters that are bonded together and are derived from each other. For the name of the sacrifice determines about itself that it is the proximity between the divine powers and the human powers. And from it, the exile for the bodies and the salvation for the *Nefashot* will be compelled. He whose *Nefesh* was redeemed by God through Abraham owns the entire world, and all the more so with the Lord connecting to him the power from His power through the secret of the *He*, which He gave from His Name to his name [Abram becoming Abraham through the addition of a *He*]. And it is a letter, and for its sake He made a covenant – and not just a mere covenant. His covenant is the change of birth, adding from the power of the females to the power of the males through a Name. The witness is 'the minister of organs' (ש"ר אבר"ם = 753), taking the tenth power that exists within the matter. And he is [=] 'the minister of the matter' (ש"ר החמ"ר), who is [=] 'the minister of the essence of the brain' (ש"ר עצ"ם המ"ח) according to *Kabbalah* through the combination of 'Sarai [with] Abram' (ש"ר י אבר"ם). And it divides the tenth power into two equal parts made from *YHWH*, to give half the power to the male and the remainder half to the female. The perforated and explicated feminine [Name] will return to be a minister of *He*, and the masculine one will be the interpreter of *He*. And the one doing this is the keeper of the organ. And he is that one revealing to man [=] 'the love of the Lord' (אהבת ה הש"ם). Concerning this, there were ten years of delay of births we hinted at.

The order of *Wayera*

And so, the matter of *Wayera Elaw* comes to inform us in it about the essence of prophecy according to this prophet. And he interprets for us his rung in it, and how he saw what he has seen. The sages put a great difference between his achievement and the achievement of his nephew. And they said concerning Abraham, whose power was nice, that they resembled him in the likeness of people. Concerning Lot, whose power was evil, they resembled him in the likeness of angels. Behold, with this they revealed to us the virtue of this one in prophecy and the inferiority of that one. And they told us that the one seeing something from them that is closer to the perceived is more excellent and his power is more complete than the one seeing what is far from the perceived. It is known that the angels are [from] educated [persons] and the people are perceived. And they said: "He said to the greatest of all: Those of blessed memory pointed out for us that the one that sees will see three, but two are of secondary importance compared to the one" – and this is the righteous. For he will see a power from the side of his body, a power from the side of his *Nefesh*, and a power from the side of his intellect – and this is the greatest of all. Therefore, it was said: "And the Lord went His way, as soon as He had left off speaking to Abraham, and Abraham returned unto his place" (Genesis 18:33). And immediately, it was revealed that they also departed from the angels by saying: "And the two angels came to Sodom at evening" (Genesis 19:1). In the beginning, they were three together, and now they return as two, for the greatest one of them departed from them. Their actions are revealed from the Writings, and they are things that are enough for the one that asks to know them,

when he considers them appropriately. They already appeared in the matter of prophecy in the book Guide [for the Perplexed by Maimonides] and in the rest of the books of wisdom. The people of research will drop the names of the fathers upon the human intellect, and the rest of the names upon the powers that are below it. From this, some are close to it and some are far from it. In any place, they will call the active intellect as God or the rest of the divine Names. Indeed, any kabbalist will call the Name everywhere according to what was ordered about its matter in anyone of the divine *Middot*, for this is the truth and the right [thing]. Therefore, one should consider the Names and know which *Midda* is ordered by each Name, for the *Middot* revolve according to each matter. It is known that the Name does not have *Middot* until its *Middot* revolve in itself in any side. But the *Middot* revolve according to the ordinance of all the created [things] that are compelled by them, and this will be interpreted. Behold, the researchers will interpret the matter of Lot to be a metaphor for the materialistic intellect. And his two daughters are his two powers, while his wife is the matter itself. Behold, they will infer that the angels are the advisors of the intellect, for they are the ways of straightness that advise the intellect to be saved from the midst of the wicked, which are the organs whose end is to burn in the heavenly sulfur and fire. And they will continue the entire metaphor like this. This [is why] they say that the *Torah* would not have told such a matter, even if they think that what happened was in its simplicity. Because what is the need of the researchers from this story? Indeed, the thing will not escape one of the three ways: If the thing was in its simplicity, if it was a metaphor, or if it appeared to Abraham in a dream by the way of prophecy. That it is in its simplicity is denied by the masters of research, for a story like this for them cannot

come in its simplicity. If so, it is of such a great magnitude, and it comes to teach the difference between the righteous, the evil, and the keeping that governs these and those. And if so, there is no need to revolve it to [attain] wisdom. If it is a metaphor, there is a great need to inform about the powers through this excellent way. And if it is a prophetic dream or a complete prophecy, behold, it is worthy of being written in order to inform the prophesying about the ways of prophecy and what will be shown to them in it from the matters of the divine leaderships – in any way that the prophet will see metaphors and riddles. The words of the kabbalist are that everything is Names. If so, it is worthy of being written. This is what was said by these and those about everything that resembles this from the stories that appeared anywhere in the *Torah*. Behold, Avimelech will be the power of lust that wishes to seduce the matter of the intellect. And the Name does not leave him being that, but stops all his holes so that his power does not spread to touch it. And Isaac will be instead of Abraham. The matter of the intellect is recalled sometimes with weakness and sometimes with strength. It is sometimes in the middle, and sometimes it inclines toward the weakness with a close or far inclination. And sometimes, it inclines toward the strength with a far or close inclination. Therefore, it will sometimes be told with the name of Abraham, sometimes with the name of Isaac, sometimes with the name of Jacob, and sometimes with the rest of the names according to the order of the virtues of the recalled persons who are the masters of intellect. And according to these ways, behold, those born for the fathers will be the births of the superior powers. And it will be inferred from this that some of them are good and others are evil. Ishmael will be born from Hagar, and the matter of the seven will be among some of them. The name *Eshel* (אֶשֶׁל, tamarisk) already appeared

א'כילה ש'תיה (לוייה) [the word heading make the word *Eshel*]. Or you might say 'lodging' (ל'ינה). And this is a *Notareikun* (acronym). And he remarked that there he called the Name of the Lord, and He called him to the world. And He is the One that told him, "Enough (ד'י)". Combine it with the name *Eshel* (אש"ל = 331), and behold, [you have] *Ei Shaddai* (א"ל ש"די, God the Almighty = 345). Indeed, beneath the proof are the wonders of the Name. We will say that its matter determines that the prophet, in the time of the strong prophecy, will never be able to achieve the thought of the Name – and all the more so while he is awake. This is because the thought of man is combined from a few thousand thoughts, and it is also born from perceived matters. The Lord – blessed be He – has no thought that is added to Himself, has no other title for His essence, and no one besides Him knows His essence and truth. Indeed, His keeping over man and His leadership of His details, generalities, persons, and kinds are necessary according to the existence of mankind [and] not according to the truth of divinity. From mankind, a matter of human thoughts that is opposite in its truth will be inferred, as if you say that the justice of man is to think that he will never die and also to think that he will die in his time. For he knows that by holding his breath for a moment that is shorter than an uprising he will immediately die. And behold, he knows that by thinking that he will live forever in this temporal life he thinks false thoughts. There is no claim from the nine that live in the Garden of *Eden*, for they are not with us. If it is true as well, it is not according to nature, and it can be by a way of wonder or metaphor. With all this, man is forced to think this – i.e. to think that he will live for many years until he grows really very old. If he does not think like this, he will do none of the deeds

that are needed to settle his life through them and he will not exist. The second thought is also opposite: Man is forced to think about it, for he will always fear his God throughout the days of his life, time after time, according to the magnitude. How will these two opposite thoughts gather in one carrier, which is the heart? Indeed, we must say that, since they are opposite and have one carrier, they do not have existence in a single time, for the thought depends on the time of man. By thinking about one thing, his heart will run to draw it, and its run is through leaps and jumps. Sometimes, he will draw an excellent drawing and immediately leap from it to another. And it is possible that between [two] drawings an essence of farness comes in the matter and in the virtue, or that they have a great closeness between them – either an inclination towards the essence of farness or an inclination towards the essence of closeness. Or he might think once and draw one single drawing. And another time, he will not think immediately and not draw one thing, for his thought rests. This already occurs during sleep in the matter of imagination, for there are times when he sleeps, dreams, and sees matters, and there are times when he sleeps and neither dreams nor sees anything. For the imagination rests with the repose of his feelings during his sleep. Behold, according to this recalled human matter it will be inferred that man thinks to have no knowledge of the Name and how it is in the existing [things]. Indeed, it is true that none besides Him knows His knowledge. It is also appropriate for him to think that the Lord knows everything and nothing is concealed from Him from all that is in existence, for all exists from Him. This thought should be continued and sustained in the heart with no change whatsoever. He further needs to think that knowing the Name in the particular matters will not remove the nature of possibility [the chance of free will]

from its place or force it to be derived or denied. For we know with a complete knowledge that the knowledge of the Name does not depend on the possibility, but all is derived or denied by it according to the essence of its truth – i.e. the derived is derived according to existence from Him, for He created it like this. And that which does not exist is worthy of knowing, for it is denied from existence. This will fall on the existing things that will never be changed from their existence and on the things that exist despite the denial of their existences. They are a few matters of thought that have no existence today, did not have, and will never have existence in action, but only in good thoughts. Therefore, the matter of proving and everything that resembles it in the *Torah* from what will be inferred is that the possibility depends on man – both whether it will go out into action or not, and it being righteous or evil. And so is each man of us. There is no need in them for man to bother his thought [in order to know] if either one of the two possibilities can be made clear to exist or not. But the human judgment is that which will know that nothing is concealed from it. And with all this, he is tried: "For the righteous God tries the heart and reins" (Genesis 7:10). It is not in order to know what he did not know, but so that man himself knows what he did not know clearly – but only in thought and not yet as an emergence into action. This will happen to each man in many matters in which he thinks that he is able in one thing. And when he comes to bring it out [into action], he is not able at all. See that many times ten humans or more of them stand in front of the opening of one gate by way of metaphor. And behold, the paths of the lock will be broken. The key will be in the hands of one of them, and he will be the first to ask to open the gates of the house. And he will think that it will open immediately. He will turn the key once, twice,

and thrice in the lock, and all those observing that he cannot open it will think that he does not know how to open it. Each one of them will ask to try it for himself – whether he can open it or not. And each one will want to precede his friend in this examination, until they sometimes quarrel about who should go before the other. The second will come and be tested, and he will not be able to open it – and so the third and all of them as well. For none in his heart will tolerate not to consider their power to open [the lock]. It is possible for him to open one of them, and it is possible for him not open even one of them, for the impairment of the lock is a strong impairment changed [by] a great change. Behold, all their thoughts have been in vain in those actions, and they are left with the potential, but none of them emerged into action. And this is what the *Torah* wished to reveal to us: The thought of the complete man is incomplete while it is in potential and not in action. The Lord informed us concerning the matter of proving the perfection of the thoughts of Abraham and Isaac in the worship of the Lord, and even in gladly giving their *Nefesh* and body for His honor through a complete action in the confirmation of the prophecy. Nevertheless, that which they wished to sustain did not become true after the prevention of the action, which was not from the side of one of them, but from the side of the proof that wants the action to be considered. And so, concerning what appeared in the *Mishna Torah* – "That He might 'afflict you' (ענָת = 540), and that He might 'prove you' (נִסְתָּח = 530), to know what is in your heart, etc." – behold, this is what was said about it in order to know it. The Rabbi [Maimonides] interpreted it in the Guide [for the Perplexed], [saying] that its matter is to inform his fellowmen about this. I will say that this is for knowing that the proved will know by himself the matter of his thought in

action, and this will be called a complete knowledge. For the thought is knowledge in potential. And indeed, through the action the truth of the thought will be revealed. Behold, this will always happen among the human beings with many proofs – some between man and himself, and some between him and his fellowmen. This is because man thinks that his friend should give him all that he has. And if he needs one small thing from him and returns without [that] one thing from him, the ability is [anyway] in his hand. About another friend about which he thinks that he would not help him in an easy thing, when he examines him, he will help him in a great thing. And so, man will think about himself that he can overcome one easy thing [i.e. sexual desires]. And when he examines himself, he finds his lack of ability over it, and his thought will be found as not emerging into action. The metaphor in the consideration of this man [is that] his inclination is about a nakedness of the pubes, with him thinking that at any time – if he is proved between himself and his inclination – he will stand sustained and not commit a transgression. When the time of action comes and there are no preventers, because of the essence of uniqueness [of that occasion] – i.e. [the meeting of] the man with the woman – he will not be able to conquer his inclination. Then, he will know that his thought has no truth. And if he stands strong and does not [transgress], he will know that his thought is true, and this [proof] is for the knowledge. If so, man himself is the one that proves himself, until he will know in action what he was thinking about and what he knew only in potential. And this is, "To know what is in your heart" (Deuteronomy 8:2) – i.e. until you will know yourself and that what is in your heart according to your thought. And this is what will go into action with [you saying] yes or no, for this is given by your judgment, after the future possible matters are

concealed from the knowledge of man. And they are for the knowledge, as in "That He might make you know that man does not live 'by' (ל"ע = 100) bread 'only' (לבד'ו = 42), etc." (Deuteronomy 8:3), and as in "And you shall consider in your heart that, as a man chastens etc." (Deuteronomy 8:5). And [see] also what appeared concerning the matter of the false prophet or the dreamer: "You shall not hear unto the words of that prophet, or unto that dreamer of dreams, for the Lord your God puts you to proof, to know whether you do love, etc." (Deuteronomy 13:4). For the action will testify about what is in your heart and *Nefesh*, and it will testify to your fellowmen. And this is the recalled matter of proving itself. You should not be misled by the saying, "For now I know that you are a God-fearing man" (Genesis 22:12), for you might think that this refers to the one that proves to know now what he did not know before, since the Names that came into this matter determined this matter. And this is because in the beginning of the proof it was said: "That God did prove Abraham" (Genesis 22:1). And it did not say, "And God proved Abraham". Then, it was said: "And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven" (Genesis 22:11). And this is why He told him: "For now I know that you are a God-fearing man" (Genesis 22:12). And it was not said, "For you are fearing Me", for it was not the angel that proved him but God. Whether the angel did not know the heart of Abraham and his fear of God up to now, this is no wonder, for an angel cannot know what is in the hearts of all humans. And therefore, it was further said: "And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham a second time out of heaven and said: By myself have I sworn, said the Lord" (Genesis 22:15) – as the way of every prophet, who is also a messenger of the Lord that tells the saying of the Lord. And behold, the angel of the Lord is the messenger of the

Lord – neither the Lord, nor God, nor the messenger of God in this place. The saying “Out of heaven” in the two places show that this angel – who is called the Angel of the Lord – is from the superior heavenly powers, and not from the earthly ones being proved. And it is appropriate to obey them. And the proof is that Abraham obeyed him.

The order of *Chayei Sarah*

I have already told you that which I do not need to interpret for you – all of which will be understood from what I have written in the rules of the simple things. But I will show you one way and build on it all that which is in the portion. Therefore, I will say concerning that which appears from the matter of the burial of the fathers in a special place, from Jacob adjuring Joseph to bury him in the burial of his fathers, and from Joseph adjuring his brothers to bring his bones from Egypt to Canaan, that all this and what resembles it from what concerns the virtue of the land and the plenty of their love for it in their lives and in their deaths is according to wisdom, as you will hear. Know that the sages of the research will deny the resurrection [saying] that it is as an exaggerate thought, but they will admit that it is as the intellectual thought. Instead, the mass will think about it as bodies that will live after their death. The sages of research will call all the organs wicked, for from their side man is a beast in the shape of man as the monkey is an animal in the figure of a monkey. The shape of man is changed according to nature from the shape of the monkey as the shape of the mule is changed from the shape of the ass, which are two species closely resembling each other – even though one of them is misbegotten and born from hybridism. It was already said in this secret of resurrection that the glory of the showers [bodies] is for the righteous and the wicked, while the resurrection is only for the righteous. It was further said there that the righteous ones are called living even in their deaths, while the wicked are called dead even in their lives. Behold, the righteous have all the intellectual powers. And concerning their lives, they are in them when they are in

action. And in their deaths, they are still in potential, for the name 'death' is as the name [indicating] lack according to our matter. Concerning the wicked, with them having an existence, it is their matter being alive. Behold, [indeed] they are dead and as if they were lacking. Because what is the difference for each intellectual between one that is absent today and one that will be absent tomorrow, or after a few thousand years, after his essence is forced to be absent? If so, his existence is not in the length of his life, but it is rather a complete imagination and a complete foolishness. Therefore, Solomon said in his book of research, which is the Ecclesiastes: "It is better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting, for that is the end of all men, and the living will lay it to his heart" (Ecclesiastes 7:2) – i.e. whoever lays it to his heart that he is dead in potential, even by holding his breath for a moment, is close to be the living. So, what derives from life will not die from him, even though what derives from death – [i.e.] the living – is already dead. It is inappropriate to consider the things except only in their end, as his saying: "For that is the end of all men". If so, the body with all of its organs is called 'evil', and even in its life it is called 'dead'. The *Nefesh* with all its powers is called righteous, and even in its death it is called alive. Behold, for the sages the word 'showers' is the same for 'rain' and for 'bodies'. And therefore, they said: "The glory of the showers [also: Bodies] is for the righteous and for the wicked". Indeed, concerning the organs of the righteous – with them being evil – their matter misses the intention, for they have drawn their *Nefashot* towards good with the good in their life. And they do not miss the intention of the Lord with the *Neshamot* being created in the figure of God and in His likeness. The [correct] judgment is to bury them and hoard them with ritual objects that are hoarded. And it

is inappropriate to consider them as the instruments of the precepts that are thrown [away]. This is what was hinted in the secret. Three things were said about the nails: The righteous buries them, the pious burns them, and the wicked throws them. After the judgment says that they should be buried, it is a right to dedicate a single place for all the righteous to be buried in, and all the more so for the heads of the world, to hint with this that their *Neshamah* is unique in one virtue and cleaves to the Lord according to its essence. And the living beings will run to cleave and connect their own *Nefashot* to their [of the dead heads of the world] *Nefashot* at first. And in their death, they will rush to connect the bodies to their bodies, to inform that they have a part with them after they stepped in their ways, they acted as they acted, and they resembled as much as they could to them. It is appropriate for that place to be a good place, even if the buyer will buy it for a great amount [of money]. What bears witness about our words is the matter of the Names and that the place of burial, which is *Kiriat Arba*. It is Hebron, in the land of Canaan, and it is the place of the children of Chet. If he who is selling the field and the cave that is in it, which is the cave of Machpelah and Ephron Ben Zohar – which was derived from the earth – [would sell it]. And behold, the opposite of 'whiten' (נְצָהָר = 298) is [=] 'murder' (מְצָדָה), and this is a kabbalistic [teaching]. It was already said to Abraham, "In the choice of our sepulchers bury your dead" (Genesis 23:6). And it means, "Choose the good". Behold, Hebron bears witness about the connection and cleaving that we recalled. And this is the intention of the sepulchers of their [our] fathers – to be together according to the thought concerning the investigations. The kabbalists do not deny this, but *Kabbalah* adds the possibility of the resurrection in the bodies by the way of wonder. And it challenges the

belief in it because of the possibility of the addition of growing wise according to the times [when one lives]. This is also from the things that are thought by the sages of *Kabbalah* of not being from the educated persons, who were confirmed by the way of *Kabbalah*. Therefore, we should call this belief and all those that resemble it a conceptual belief. Everything that was interpreted from the conceptual thoughts through a learned token or a kabbalistic token of the *Torah* according to the concealed way or the compelled way is called the intellectual or divine belief. The intellectual [belief] is for the masters of research, while the divine [belief] is for the masters of the Names. And the masters of *Kabbalah* also admit that the true salvation and the last resurrection is only for the *Neshamot* of the righteous. If we scorn and detest what is today in our hands, which is despised and easy in our eyes, how will we desire it after we are separated from it? Do you [know] of a man that sat a few years in jail in the midst of the waste and dreamt about the face of the Lord, to be saved from there and go out from the darkness to the light, and he [actually] went out and was saved, wishing to return there again? If you say that this is [not] true according to his will, indeed it is, for he was put in the womb of his mother, which is a jail and a place of waste. And he entered it through the genitals. He grew in the blood of menstruations, urine, and things that are inappropriate of being mentioned, and he stood there for nine months. All this is was in order to emerge from there complete and exist in this world alive. So, he is put again in his own body, so that he will grow wise and be completed with that which is lacking from him, for it was not completed in him in the beginning of his former life. We will say to you that this is not denied by us from the side of the ability of the Lord being greater than this, for our first creation is very

wise and has a tremendous capability – almost more than the thought one. Indeed, the [common] knowledge does not bear that there is a need in creating man for all these worlds, for, after there is no essence for wisdom, there is a need for more than this, and it is enough for him to keep his existence according to his achievement and wisdom. If he is complete in this world, he will gain the life in the World to Come. If we think that he is compelled, it will be inferred from us that man will exist in infinite worlds, going out of this and going into that. Therefore, we have said that these are imaginary thoughts, and we have described the [concept of] resurrection as being compelled according to the essential belief, denied according to the educated nature, and possible according to the wonder. There is no need to prolong this more, for it is enough for the whole persons in their perfection. Indeed, concerning what was further recalled in Portion *Chayei Sarah* from the blessing of Abraham up to the end of the matter about the pairing of Isaac and Rebecca, the intention in them according to the research is that the judgment of the complete person should be to seek for someone that is complete from among his own kind and his relatives. Nevertheless, he should take heed to not live among his relatives that are found [walking] in a wrong way. And he should separate from them as much he can be separated. And this is what is useful for him and also for the birth. This is also the way of the intellect with the organs, for it uses them – the good ones. And it should separate from the rest [of the organs] as far as possible. Indeed, Abraham taking a wife and giving birth to children is according to the research of a special wisdom that he added to his wisdom from the wisdom of the nations. It is the secret of the wisdom of the incense that atones according to Wisdom, and not according to *Kabbalah*. For the secret of the incense was

not revealed according to *Kabbalah* up to Moses and Aaron, and because of it Nadab and Abihu died, as it was said: "And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took each of them his censer, and put fire therein, and laid incense thereon, etc." (Leviticus 10:1); "And there came forth the fire from before the Lord, and they died before the Lord" (Leviticus 10:2). And there is no incense without fire. According to *Kabbalah*, Nadab and Abihu 'prophesied with *Yud He'* = נְבָאָן בַּיְרָד הַאֶ' (א"ה = 87) and indeed [=] 'were lost in the *AHW"Y* בָּאָהָרָוִי (א"ז). "Took each of them of his censer (מְחַתְּתָו) – are 'five letters' (אִישׁ שׁ חַמְמָתָה הַקְדָּשׁ) – are 'five letters' (אִישׁ שׁ שְׁמָרָתָה אַתִּירָתָה). And they are ten 'holy Names' (אַתִּירָתָה שְׁמָרָתָה הַקְדָּשׁ = 1155), which have 'seals of fire' (שׁ אַתִּירָתָה = 1165), for [=] 'His seal is fire' (שׁ אַתִּירָתָה). The proof is the combination of 'fire' (שׁ אַתִּירָתָה = 301) with 'incense' (קְטָרָתָה = 709), whose secret is 'the beginning of the drop' (קְטָרָתָה רָאשֵׁת הַטְּפָה = 1020), 'fire, cold, *Tet* (תְּטָהָרָתָה קְטָרָתָה = 1010), [=] 'the addition' (יִתְרָתָה) of *Alef Yud*, [=] 'I tied' (קְשָׁרָתָה) and [=] 'you untie' (תְּתִירָתָה). These are kabbalistic wonders requiring a great keeping for knowing their truth, lest one offers a strange fire. It was said: "Your breath" (רָוחַק מִתְּאֵלָלָם = 274) is a fire that 'shall devour you' (תְּאֵלָלָם = 491)" (Isaiah 33:11). And one should not offer it without being [conscious of what he is doing], or he who offers will be devoured by the fire. So it was written about the matter of Korah: "And fire came forth from the Lord, and devoured the two hundred fifty men, etc." (Numbers 16:35). And there, it was said: "To be a memorial unto the children of Israel, to the end that no common man etc." (Numbers 17:5). And it was further said there: "And Moses said unto Aaron: Take your fire-pan, and put fire therein from off the altar, and incense thereon, etc." (Numbers 17:11). And there, it was said: "And he stood between the

dead and the living, etc." (Numbers 17:13). The sages have already hinted at this by saying: Why was it called 'incensed' קְטָרָה? For it was burning incense for idolatry. It was said that she is Hagar herself. And behold, 'incensed' (קְטָרָה = 320) is in *Gematria* [=] 'fool' (חָטוֹרָה). For that same wisdom is the wisdom of foolishness of the nations, and it is from the Names of impurity. Therefore, it was said: "But unto the sons of the concubines, that Abraham had, etc." (Genesis 25:6). In *Kabbalah*, it appeared as 'their concubines'. It was written that he gave them Names of impurity. But about Isaac, it was said: "And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac" (Genesis 25:5) – for he gave him Names of holiness and purity. And about the others, it was said: "And he sent them away from Isaac his son, while he, etc." (Genesis 25:6). And the rest are the children of Keturah, for they were not ascribed to him. Only Isaac is his son, and they are the sons of the concubines. Ishmael is also the son of Abraham, who died in repentance, for it was said: "And he expired and died, and was gathered unto his people" (Genesis 25:17). And so it was said about Abraham: "And Abraham expired, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years, and was gathered to his people" (Genesis 25:8). And it was said: "And Isaac and Ishmael his sons buried him, etc." (Genesis 25:9). And here is the blessing for Isaac, for it was said: "And it came to pass after the death of Abraham that God blessed Isaac his son" (Genesis 25:11). Indeed, the blessing of Ishmael is to be fruitful and multiply, and not establishing a covenant, as it was said about Isaac: "But My covenant will I establish with Isaac" (Genesis 17:21).

The order of *Toladot Yitzchak*

What appears concerning the matter of the generations of Jacob and Esau in the portion of the generations of Isaac according to the research is a metaphor about the two inclinations, which are created in one's stomach. This one is a quiet man, dwelling in tents – i.e. schools – always asking to study the *Torah*. And his brother is a cunning hunter, a man of the field. [He is] external, while Jacob is internal, "Because he did eat of his venison" (Genesis 25:28) returning to Isaac, who showed him that he will perhaps repent. He did not say that he hates Jacob, for, if he loved Esau so much, all the more he loved Jacob. If you say according to the simple [evidence], "Why did he wish to bless him if it is as you say?", I will tell you that it was because he would have repented, had he received his blessing. There are some who say that he thought the blessing to be appropriate for him. And therefore, it was said before the matter: "And it came to pass, that when Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see" (Genesis 27:1) – for he did not see appropriately. For the matter of "And they were a bitterness of spirit unto Isaac and Rebekah" (Genesis 26:35) preceded this one; his spirit was driven away from him and he almost mistook the blessing. Behold, he erred in seeing and feeling by saying about the sight, "And his eyes were dim" (Genesis 27:1), and about the feeling, "And he felt him and said (...) but the hands are the hands of Esau" (Genesis 27:22). He did not recognize him and he did not mistake what he had heard – for he already said, "The voice is the voice of Jacob" (Genesis 27:22) – what he tasted – for it was said, "And his mother made savory food, such as his father loved" (Genesis 27:14) – and what he smelled – for it was

said, "And he smelled the smell of his raiment, and blessed him" (Genesis 27:27). And the end of his blessing is: "Cursed be everyone that curse you, and blessed be everyone that bless you" (Genesis 27:29). And this is the matter of his saying to Esau: "And have blessed him? Yea, and he shall be blessed" (Genesis 27:33). For he was not allowed to curse him. The matters of the curses in the *Torah* are on condition and not absolute, for this was impossible. The blessings of Balaam are against his will because of the saying: "You shall not curse the people, for they are blessed" (Numbers 22:12). This is the matter of the divine supervision, for the Lord had already destined the blessing to Abraham and kept it in an eminent keeping with Isaac – and all the more so with Jacob, whose bed was complete and who begot twelve righteous tribes according to the order of the simplicity of the book.

The order of *Wayetze Yaakov*

Many things were said about that which was written in Portion *Wayetze* concerning the matter of the ladder in the explications and teachings, in the Guide [for the Perplexed by Maimonides] and the [Book of the] Master [Sefer Ha-Melamed by Abulafia]. We have also recalled a matter that resembles it, which is the matter of "And a matter went out of *Eden*" (Genesis 2:10), which will not be concealed from the sages. Indeed, we shall add here a small thing and say in general that the perfect *Torah* – which teaches the wisdom to the gullible – being a loyal testament between us and the Lord – blessed be He – was given for bringing the power of man's intellect into action. Concerning whoever had his intellect going out from potential into action, he is the one about which it is appropriate to say that the *Torah* was given for him. Being this so, how can it be possible for the *Torah* to be given by someone else rather than him [Moses] who testified about himself, since no other prophet like him arose in Israel? For, if someone like him had arisen before him, during his time, or after him, there would have been there a great consideration in the hearts and a wondrous suspicion. Someone could say as it was already told me by one sage gentile with a question: "The fathers and all those that preceded Moses before the giving of the *Torah* were complete in [their] perfection, but the *Torah* was aimed at him [Moses] when it was given – and ever since, and up to now, and from now until forever. Or [can we say that] one of them was not complete?". This was the question of the gentile, and I understood from his words that he wished to tell me: "If one of them was complete without *Torah*, what is it, if so, its need? And if one of them was not complete, what is the

need of telling matters of imperfect people in order to complete through their story whoever is not complete? And if their story did not appear in order to complete the lacking [person], behold, the story is entirely in vain". Hear my answer that I replied to him, for it is appropriate to reply to any asker like his by the way of "Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own eyes" (Proverbs 26:5). For his question was about the words of the *Torah*, and in my eyes his question was in the likeness of skepticism. And our Rabbis have already ordered us to study quickly what we should reply to a skeptic gentile. Moreover, his question was [asked] in front of many Jews and gentiles, and there were sages among them, for the two of us were speaking alone, and the rest of the people were hearing on the condition that no man would answer in order not to help either me or him. I answered and told him: "Brother! Know that according to the truth the first ones that are recalled in the *Torah* as complete and a few of them whose perfection was not recalled were complete without this *Torah* that we have in our hands today according to its simplicity. Indeed, their perfection was according to its secrets that were known by the way of research, and it is appropriate to believe with all this that the perfections of the human beings are unequal. But they are rungs in which each man among them is as he is". Then, I brought him evidence from the matter of the ladder, in which it was said: "And he dreamed and behold, a ladder was set up on the earth (...) and, behold, the Lord stood beside him and said, etc." (Genesis 28:12). I asked him whether this dream was a dream of prophecy or not, and he said: "Yes". I told him if what appears in it is in its simplicity – that there is an actual ladder as the ladders found among us, made either of gold, silver, copper, from one of the other metals, from trees, or from stones, etc.

And [I asked whether] its legs are upon the earth, but from its top and up to its legs there is a distance of five hundred years, and upon it the Lord stands. From there, He speaks with those ascending and descending on it. Or [is it possible that] nothing from this metaphor is as its simplicity, but all is a metaphor? And he told me that in their opinion – his and that of all the sages – they believe that all is a metaphor. I further asked him and told him: "Since it is a metaphor, why is it a metaphor and what is its intention?". He answered and said to me against his will that it is a metaphor by which the Lord intended to inform us through its matter in a few things concerning the truth of the entire existence, and its intention is to complete our lacks through it. Now that I put him in the web, spread for him [the topic], and caught him in his lie, I further answered him that this is the way of prophecy that through few things completes the lacking [person]. If so, with the first [forefathers] being complete, their perfection was a perfection after another. For the perfection is in the human nature, and it is that which will be achieved by the active intellect with it chasing wisdom and desiring it with a strong and brave [heart]. The achievement is also about rungs in necessity because of the nature of mankind. And its lack is in the beginning of its being along [the way of] perfection. This is the matter of the ladder, which is a metaphor for the achievement of the Name with no doubt from the knowledge of the truth of existence. Those considering it were called by the *Torah* the angels of God. And because they have rungs in their achievements, it was recalled about them [the concept of] ascension and descent, meaning that some of them are very close according to mankind to the divinity. And some are very far, and they are still in the inferior rung. Nevertheless, they are the angels of God, since they were included in the generality of

the people of the ladder on which the human beings – called the angels of God – ascend and descend. The proof is: "But they' (וַיַּהַי = 37) mocked the messengers of God, and despised His words, and scoffed at His prophets" (2 Chronicles 36:16) – and many others like this. Indeed, the rest of men that were not included in the generality of those ascending and descending on the ladder are not the angels of God. Therefore, with each one of the first [prophets] being complete, the Lord renewed for each one of them an easy way of perfection. Indeed, the matter of the *Torah* – which includes stories and precepts – is for ordering the way of perfection with ease. This will determine the virtue of the *Torah*, the virtue of the reception from the Lord, and the virtue of the nation that is dedicated to be a merit for the Lord compared to all the other people, which receives this perfect *Torah*. Its stories appeared in it in the beginning in order to inform about the relation of this nation [with the Lord], and to order the virtue of our fathers with the Lord. For, when the Lord appeared before Jacob in the matter of the ladder, He did not tell him, "I am the God of the heavens and the God of the earth", or something that resembles it. But He told him: "I am the Lord, the God of Abraham your father, and the God of Isaac" (Genesis 28:13). And then, He told him: "And in you and in your seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 28:14). Its precepts appeared in it in order to distinguish this nation with statutes and ordinances that are known to it and concealed from the other nations, for they bring it to be distinguished and sanctified more than any [other] people in the worship of the Lord. It is the way that was known by Abraham our father orally, and not from writings, as the testament of the Writings that says: "Because that Abraham heard to My voice etc." (Genesis 26:5). And with the coming of Moses,

those matters were written so that they could be found in writing as they were [found] orally. If so, there was nothing in vain in them. And the Lord – blessed be He – wished that the virtue of this holy nation be made known to the eyes of all the other peoples. And He stipulated about it that, as He – blessed be He – raises us with His precepts and the study of His *Torah* in the eyes of the nations, so He will lower it to their eyes and spread it among them in the four corners of the earth, if they do not keep His *Torah*, precepts, statutes, and ordinances. It became a metaphor and a proverb, for the judgment says that its lowering will be the opposite of its virtue. When they transgressed its precepts, they were punished by Him measure for measure in what He had frightened [admonished] them [before]. But He Himself told them: "And yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not reject them, neither will I abhor them etc." (Leviticus 26:44). And He said: "But I will remember for their sakes the covenant of their ancestors etc." (Leviticus 26:45). And behold, He said that in the end He will return them to their virtue by saying in the end of the *Torah*, after the blessing and the curse: "And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon you, etc." (Deuteronomy 30:1); "And [you] shall return unto the Lord your God, and listen to His voice, etc." (Deuteronomy 30:2); "That then the Lord your God will turn your captivity, and have compassion upon you, etc." (Deuteronomy 30:3); "If any of you that are dispersed be in the uttermost parts of heaven, from thence will the Lord your God gather you, etc." (Deuteronomy 30:4); "And the Lord your God will bring you into the land which your fathers possessed, etc." (Deuteronomy 30:5). And all that cleaves to that good destination is for them, while the opposite is for their enemies, as it was said: "And the Lord your God will put all these curses upon your enemies, etc."

(Deuteronomy 30:7); "And you shall return and hear to the voice of the Lord, etc." (Deuteronomy 30:8). If so, how could this eminent condition – which the Lord had stipulated with one nation that is more unique than all the other nations and distinguished from them in the essence of distinction – exist without a writing known to the entire nation? And it is the book of the *Torah*, which is called a Testament. This was not possible during the time of the fathers and all the more so before them, for there was no nation yet that was unique for the Lord, but only individuals from any nation that used to grow wise, and be completed and saved. When the nation separated and grew becoming a great nation, there were six hundred thousand men on foot besides the children that left Egypt by trials, signs, wonders, war, and by a mighty hand, an outstretched arm, and great terrors. In that moment, it was appropriate to renew this nation's precepts, statutes, and righteous ordinances in order to complete it in general, until nothing would be lacking from it – either less or more – lest it will not be completed as it should be; until all of those among the people of the hinted ladder will be counted together, and it will be a small [number] with might. This was my answer to the question of the recalled gentile. And since he had heard my words, he told me: "Well done for answering me appropriately. I have asked the sages of Israel who had a great reputation in the wisdom of the *Torah* and its study for a lot of days, but none of them managed to settle my mind with his answer like you. From that day on, he vowed to accept from me anything [that I said] from the secrets of the *Torah*, and he fell in love with me. And I have set in his heart the arrow of the desire to know the Name, until he admitted and said: "Moses is the truth and his *Torah* is the truth". And there is

no need to reveal more concerning the matter of the gentile.

Behold, my opinion about the matter of the ladder was already interpreted for you in the question and the answer. And know that the Lord – blessed be He – said to Jacob in his dream: "And behold, I am with you and will keep you to whatever place you go, etc." (Genesis 28:15). And after that, this immediately appeared: "And Jacob awakened out of his sleep, etc." (Genesis 28:16). And it was said: "And he was afraid, and said: How full of awe, etc." (Genesis 28:17). All this was a hint at the matter of the Diaspora of Israel and at the salvation in the end, as it was said: "And [I] will bring you back into this land" (Genesis 28:15). For we have said that in the end of the *Torah* it is said: "That then the Lord your God will turn your, etc." (Deuteronomy 30:3); "And the Lord your God will bring you into the land, etc." (Deuteronomy 30:5). After I awakened you to this according to *Kabbalah*, which is not questioned by wisdom, you should understand with this as well all the matters of the portion – either concerning the matter of the flock, or in the matter of the birth of the sons and the four women. Whoever considers the generalities that we had gathered according to the simple [interpretations] in this portion will be able to understand everything as it is with ease. Nevertheless, you should be awakened [to the fact] that the sons are as the number of the zodiacal signs and that they have one sister called Dinah. The *Middot* are *Yud*"*Gimel* (13), but one of them is the *Midda* of Judgment, and *Yud*"*Bet* (12) of them are the *Middot* of Compassion. The flock is an appellation for the multitude of the people, and their shepherd is the Rabbi leading them. The appellation of Laban and Edom being red and white is in the likeness of the Sun and the

Moon, and the shape of Jacob is carved on the throne of honor. The heaven is called the Throne of the Lord, for it was said: "The heaven is My Throne" (Isaiah 66:1). And the *Teraphim* (תְּרָפִים) are the gods of Laban, for it was said: "Wherefore have you stolen my gods?" (Genesis 31:30). The Name *Elohim* (God) is a Name referring to the potentials, and it is combined. Some of it is for the true divine worship and some of it for idolatry. Also, some of it is for the angels and the leaders of humankind. The heap [of stones] and the pillar, which are structures of stone, are witnesses for the powers that rule and strengthen according to the divine *Middot*. The Aramaic translation of 'wave' (גָּל, *Gal*) is 'heap of stones' (גָּגָר, *Jegar* = 213), and the Aramaic translation of 'eternity' (צָעֵד, *ed*) is 'evidence' (שָׁהַדּוּתָא, *Sahadutha* = 716). Combine 'heap of stones' with 'evidence' and you will find 'passion for the intercourse' (תָּאוּת הַדְּשָׁגָן = 749). And its secret is 'the passion of the sexual intercourse' (תָּאוּת הַמְשָׁגָן = 1185), for with it Laban tied the power of Jacob. The proof is that which he said to him: "If you shall afflict my daughters, and if you shall take, etc." (Genesis 31:50). And therefore, he ascribed the ordinance to the Lord by saying: "The God of Abraham, the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge between us, etc." (Genesis 31:53). And therefore, he said: "And Jacob swore by the fear of his father Isaac" (ibid.) – which is the *Midda* of Judgment. Behold, the Day of Judgment is a witness for the Day of Atonement, during which it is forbidden to have a sexual intercourse, for it is also one of the five afflictions. And there is no other day with this prohibition for the entire Israel except for this in all the days of the years in the *Torah*, and it is the Day of Fates. Misbelievers and atoners are one fate for the Lord [the atoners] and one fate for

'azazel (עֲזָזֵל) [the misbelievers]. Therefore, it was said: "And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. And Jacob said when he saw them: This is God's camp" (Genesis 32:2). And he revealed the secret by saying: "And he called the name of that place *Mahanaim* (מחנין"ם, two armies facing each other = 148)" (Genesis 32:3) – whose secret is [=] 'Libra' (♎) that governs in a twofold way. And it is the 'zodiacal sign of *Tishri*' (י"ט = 987), for their secret is [=] 'their beginning is alone' (רָאשִׁיָּת לְבָדָם). Behold, he began the portion with the matter of the angels of God and he ended with them.

The order of *Wayishlach Wayeshev*

He further continued the matter about sending messengers and separating his soldiers and people into two camps. [He gave] a hint at the matter of the angels that he had recalled and a hint at the matter of *Mahanaim* that he had seen. He said after this separation: "If Esau comes to the one camp, and smite it, then the camp which is left shall escape" (Genesis 32:9). And the matter of the wrestling was without a doubt in the appearance of prophecy. And the matter of the sinew of the thigh-vein, which is upon the hollow of the thigh, is a hint at the prohibition to eat from the secret of the matter concerning the intercourse upon which he swore. Later, it was said about this that Esau immediately came to him and kissed him. All of it is with vowel points, and its *Kuf* was already exchanged with a *Kaf*. And this one went to Seir and that one to Succoth. The matter of Dina, the daughter of Leah, with Sechem, the son of Chamor – and all that cleaves to it – is known from the name of Dina, the name of Sechem, and the name of his father Chamor. This is because, when these matters are taken by the way of philosophy, they immediately bind one another according to the general way and not the particular one. When they are taken according to the way of *Kabbalah*, we do not put aside even one of their letters without need. And indeed, the plenty of length will be inferred from this. And this is that from which we run away. And therefore, the generalities will be enough on each side. We should say that the name *El Shaddai* (God the Almighty) was told to Jacob through the change of his name. And between Israel and *El Shaddai*, there is only *Dalet'Resh*' (ד'ך), for this is Judgment and that is Compassion – *Sriel Shaddai El*

(שֶׁרֶיֶל שְׁדי אֱלֹהִים, Beam of God, Almighty God). It was already made clear that this Name is in charge of fruitfulness and multiplication. And therefore, it was said with it: "Be fruitful and multiply" (Genesis 35:11). We have recalled above the matter of the chiefs of Esau and what appears in Portion *Wayeshev Yaakov*. And it is the matter of the generations of Joseph and his accidents with his dreams. They were told to him in order to inform us concerning the secret of the dreams and their essence in general, and because there is a thing there that is the Master of Dreams. And he says and tells right and wonderful matters about them along with horrible futures. And he himself is the Master of Prophecies, and he informs concerning the futures through metaphors and riddles. Behold, the Sun and the Moon were compared to a father and a mother, and the twelve stars were compared to twelve brothers. And they are twelve zodiacal signs, even though each zodiacal sign includes many stars. The matter of selling Joseph and going down to Egypt after the birth of Perez and Zerah from Tamar and Judah by harlotry, as it was said – "And Judah saw her; he thought her to be a harlot, etc." (Genesis 38:16) – informed us with this concerning all the writings that are bonded one another, as it was a custom of the ancients before giving the *Torah* in many of their matters. And harlotry was very severe for them, because it is from famous matters, such as their saying about Dinah: "Should one deal with our sister as with a harlot?" (Genesis 34:31). And it was also said: "And Judah said: Let her take it, lest we be put to shame" (Genesis 38:23). And it was further said: "Tamar your daughter-in-law had played the harlot. And moreover, behold, she is with a child by harlotry. And Judah said: Bring her forth, and let her be burned" (Genesis 38:24). And she kept *Yabam* (בָּמְתָן = the husband's brother)

according to simplicity, as it was the ancient custom. Behold, Joseph kept himself from foolishness of man. Even though it was said that the gentile has no wives (i.e. for Israel the woman is not considered to be married – *Sanhedrin* 82), he told her: "How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" (Genesis 39:9).

The order of *Meketz Wayigash*

Uplifted and praised be the Name of the Lord that brings advice far. For He had purposed, and who shall disannul it? Surely, He has done this to turn the causes, to keep the preceding dreams. And who can stand in the secret of God without knowing the revolutions of His wonders that are revealed and all the more so concealed? Behold and observe carefully that the matter of him being put in jail was a close cause, to keep his dreams through dreams as well, as we were told according to the simple [interpretation] in the dream of the butler, in the dream of the baker, and in the dream of the Pharaoh being changed twice – up to that which is written in Portion *Haraav Wehaseva* (the hunger and the satiation), which is Portion *Wayehi Meketz* revolved on itself. If you take these writings according to the way of the philosophical secret, the hunger will be: "Not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord" (Amos 8:11). And it will be all the more so according to the way of *Kabbalah*. The laying up of corn is a great wisdom according to the matter of the rest of the people that did not know [they should] lay up [the corn]. And it comes to inform us that the end of the pilings and the gathering of wisdoms brings to that – i.e. the gatherer has plenty and those spreading it have little. The end of the gatherer who collects and is called Joseph is to be a governor and a ruler. And all his servants will be sold to him, for he was also sold in the beginning to be a servant. The sage said about this: "Sell yourself to be a servant, for the next day others will be sold to you as servants and you will rise without assets". Grow wise in the dreams and you will see that the number in them is equal. For Joseph saw in the

beginning of his dreams sheaves, and according to the intellects he was excellent. After that, he saw the Sun, the Moon, and the eleven stars, and this came to be in its simplicity in number and imagination. The butler saw three branches and the diviner told his interpretation: "The three branches are three days" (Genesis 40:12). And behold, the number is equal. The baker saw three baskets and the diviner interpreted and said: "The three baskets are three days" (Genesis 41:18). And behold, the number is equal – three replacing three. Moreover, even in *Gematria* they are equal, for three 'baskets' סְלִימָן (סְלִימָן) = 140 are in *Gematria* three [=] 'days' יְמִינָן (יְמִינָן). The Pharaoh saw seven fat cows and seven gaunt cows, and their solution [interpretation] was seven years of satiation and seven years of famine. Then, he saw seven good ears of corn, and after that seven foul ears of corn. And it was said about both: "The dream is one" (Genesis 41:26). And this double and multiplication appeared to determine the speed rate. Behold, the Writings also informed us that it is advisable for man to correct by himself while he can and has the power [to do so]. Whatever he finds is about his weakness, either concerning the matter of this world or the matter of the World to Come, as our sages of blessed memory said: "What will he, who did not correct on *Shabbat*'s eve, eat on *Shabbat*?"; and it was said: "Correct yourself in the anteroom, so that you will be able to enter the living-room. Behold, according to what is recalled here our ancestors went down to Egypt, and the perfect *Torah* revealed to us that the Lord – blessed be He – revolves a cause for another – and a cause is always for another. And He makes one thing for one thing. Even though some of the stories seem as the matter appears because of man, the *Torah* told us that it is not so, so that man should trust the Lord in everything that he does, as it was said: "All your deeds will be in God's

Name". And the Writings say this: "In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct your paths" (Proverbs 3:6). And it was also said through the words our sages: "My life, my son and my food do not depend on merit, but on the righteous". And they further said that all is in God's hands except for the fear of God. And this is what should be believed. They further said that all is in God's hands except for thorns and snares, for it was said: "Thorns and snares are in the way of the forward; he that keeps his soul holds himself far from them" (Proverbs 25:3). And behold, it was written: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean upon your own understanding" (Proverbs 3:5). Behold, it is appropriate also from the side of Judgment for man to think that any good that comes to us is from the Lord, even though he revolves it. And all this is a reward given to us by the Lord, and it does not matter from which side. Concerning any evil thing that will happen to him, it is appropriate for him to think that it is from the Lord from the side of punishment according to the Judgment of His straight ordinance, even though he knows that he revolved it on himself until that calamity reached him. If so, the judgment is that he should blame himself, and his heart should not fret against God, as it was said: "The foolishness of man perverts his way, and his heart frets against the Lord" (Proverbs 19:3). These matters are very subtle and very deep, and they are secrets that should be hidden from those that know their truth with eyes of bats that do not see in the day because of the brightness of the sunlight. And they think that they can see at night. All the more, if they cannot see during the day, they cannot see at night, and this is only because of the weakness of their eyes. So is this. We are allowed to reveal neither one of the secrets of the *Torah*, nor of the secrets of existence, nor anything that is concealed from the essence of man, for

there is something that should not be revealed there. And it is because of the weakness in the knowledge of those receiving it, who are most of the sages of the *Talmud* of our times. For they did not remove themselves from the perceived, and they think that they gathered every learned wisdom. They call most of the imagined [things] as learned [things], for they do not know how to distinguish between holy and secular, and how to keep the *Shabbat*, the holidays, and *Kippur* [the Day of Atonement].

See and observe how straight was the way of the righteous Joseph, for with all that he made his brothers sad he aimed at forgiving the transgression of selling him and their unfounded hatred. For the end proved the beginning: Had he done everything he did according to the way of revenge, he could have killed them a few thousand times, or given them great torments; but he did not do any of those things, but comforted them: "And spoke kindly unto them" (Genesis 50:21). And when he became known to them, as it appeared in the Portion *Wayigash Elav Yehuda*, he told them: "And now be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that you sold me, etc." (Genesis 45:5). And he further said: "And God sent me before you, etc." (Genesis 45:7). And he further said: "So now it was not you that sent me here, etc." (Genesis 45:8).

The order of *Wayechi Yaakov*

In the end of the Portion *Wayehi Yaakov*, it was said: "And when Joseph's brethren saw that their father was dead, etc." (Genesis 50:15). And behold, his answer was: "Do not fear, for I am in the place of God. And as for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, etc." (Genesis 50:19); "Now therefore do not fear, I will sustain you, etc." (Genesis 50:21). Why should I further discuss these portions now that I informed you what the simple interpretation determined for us from them in general, and now that I revealed you the concealed way in each one of them? For from it you will understand the rest of the generalities. And all the more so, I informed you about many generalities from which you will awaken to understand all the rest. And the blessings that appeared in the matter of the Portion *Wayechi Yaakov* are all metaphors with no doubt. A comparison is easy to understand by those that understand the metaphors and the riddles, and all the more so by those that are skilled in the rhymes, poetry, and in florid styles, for they are the masters of reading, pedantry, and wisdom – and all the more so by those that know the ways of the metaphors of the sages by heart, whose wonderful riddles are found interspersed within the *Talmud* and gathered in studies and legends. For our ancient sages of blessed memory were complete in the second completion that we had recalled, and it is the completion of piousness (*Chasidut*). And they are all the more [complete] in the first, which is the righteousness (*Tzedek*). Some of them reached a little of the third completion, as it was hinted about few of them saying that such person is worthy of the Divine Presence dwelling upon him – such as Yehoshua Ben Nun, whose

generation is not worthy of this. They have mentioned many persons such as this, and they revealed us by this that the generation sometimes prevents this virtue from those worthy of it. And do not be astonished by this, for it is a compulsory matter. Now that I finished talking about the twelve portions that include the entire book of Genesis – and it is the book that I have called Book of Wisdoms [so, this book, Key to the Wisdoms, is meant as a key to Genesis] – I will complete my words with one general and excellent matter, which includes in general all that appears in this book according to the intention of the writer. And this was made clear to me when I placed it before me. It tells us the matter of his [Adam's or man's] birth and his ways in all that he has done. The matter is this: Know that the nature of man is to incline after his tempers for necessity. And the habit will add to him a natural power that is similar to his powers. And Wisdom will add to him a natural and habitual power by being similar to his temper and habit. The metaphor in this is that a man whose temper overcomes all his other tempers is sanguine, and blood is spiritual [and] airy. This temper decrees that its master will be warm and moist as the essential blood, and the warmth of the blood does not burn as the warmth of fire, but sets the body healthy because of the completion of the natural air that is in the body, whose nature is to ascend. And the moist of the blood will determine the merit of nature. Behold, this man is generous for necessity, and his *Nefesh* foresees, sees the ways of the generous, and rejoices in making itself accustomed with their habit, until the generosity of this man will increase in a great habit with [the company of] the generous people. Furthermore, the *Nefesh* of this man brings him to connect to the generous sages. And he further learns from their wisdom, until he returns to be wise like them in the figure and likeness.

Behold, his wisdom helped him and drove him to an addition of generosity, until this man became generous in three wonderful ways – in the way of nature, in the way of habit, and in the way of wisdom. Behold, this man was completed in the essence of completion in the *Midda* of generosity. How? Behold, this generous person was generous in nature in the beginning, but he was lacking the truth of the essence in the *Midda* of generosity. For he could walk the way of the generous people, but he was not accustomed with them, until he went along the way of their *Midda* as it is appropriate for it according to the men accustomed to it. When he began walking with them and studying from them its appropriate habit, he walked in it in their way according to what they are. But he was still lacking the completion of this *Midda*, until he learned from the sages of the *Middot* the essence of generosity and was completed in it, neither adding nor subtracting from it. Then, he can be called complete in its essence of completion. With this metaphor, I compared for you the *Middot* of generosity. You should compare all the *Middot* with those persons that are straight, lacking, or have an addition. And there are always three ways for each *Midda*. You may say that there is a good *Midda*, an evil *Midda*, and a *Midda* in the middle. Put the middle one as the [chosen] *Midda*, and the two edges are good and evil. You will say that the *Midda* of generosity is straight, and it is the middle one. And the *Midda* of distributing is good for the receivers and bad for its masters, while the *Midda* of consumption is bad for the receivers and good for its masters. We find that both are evil in the consideration of their truth. If so, the middle one is left alone, for it is straight and good for its masters and those that receive it. Like this, you should judge all the *Middot* according to their sequences. And you should set each *Midda* on three

rungs – one natural, one habitual, and one intellectual. Know that among the three the complete one is that which is good and straight. Now that I said this, I will say that Moses, our Rabbi of blessed memory, was complete in all his *Middot* from the side of his complete nature and temper. He grew up among the biggest and was accustomed with being drawn after their ways with what his tempers would [do to] help him, until his ways were higher than their ways as the heaven is higher than the earth. And his completion went farther than their completion as the distance of the east from the west. With all this, he further studied wonderful wisdoms and received divine secrets, until all his *Middot* were completed in him in the three ways of completion concerning the essence of what can receive a human completion above any other born [creature]. All these completions compelled him to complete his fellowmen with his completions, and he informed us concerning the entire way of Formation and Creation. And he told us that many human beings were complete in their temper, but their evil habit and foolishness brought them to the essence of lack; many of them were complete in temper and habit, but their foolishness prevented them the completion; and many of them had a good habit and a bad temper, and they were fools in necessity. And he told us the ways of few human beings with his stories that resemble those [mentioned above]. Indeed, the essence of what he informed us concerning all this was that there will be no completion in any way for those that did not grow wise in the virtues of the *Middot*. And this was a cause for them to grow wise also in the intellectual virtues. By this, he orders us since then, until today, and forever – us, those that preceded us, and those that will come after us – that the way through which man will be completed and after which it is

appropriate to be drawn is the way of the fathers and the way of their sons, which come after them in each generation. Had he not have told us their ways, who among us would have known which way he has to take in these matters? If so, necessity brought him to introduce first for us the matters of the generalities, and a few of the complete and lacking particulars, so that we set aside the ways of the lack and take the ways of completeness. After that, it was only right for him to inform us concerning his birth and the wonders of the action of the Lord with him before his birth – i.e. from the time that he was in his mother's womb, during his birth, and after he grew up. [And he told us] all that happened to him with the Lord Who sent him and with the people to whom he was sent – Jews and Gentiles altogether. Behold, because of this he began in the second book with the matter of the names of the tribes – in order to tell us the son of whom was Moses and from which tribe he was. He did not tell us that he was from the tribe whose kingship was appropriate, but that he was from the tribe that was separated from the rest of the tribes in holiness and purity. And about it, it was said that it was alone. The Lord was their inheritance, and they were separated in order to be the most holy – a tribe always worshipping the Lord. Behold, I have already completed all that I have intended to speak in general concerning the matter that I have recalled. And with this, the first book is completed according to the ability and according to the need of my intention about it. Praise the Lord Who forgives the faithful for letting me begin and finish!